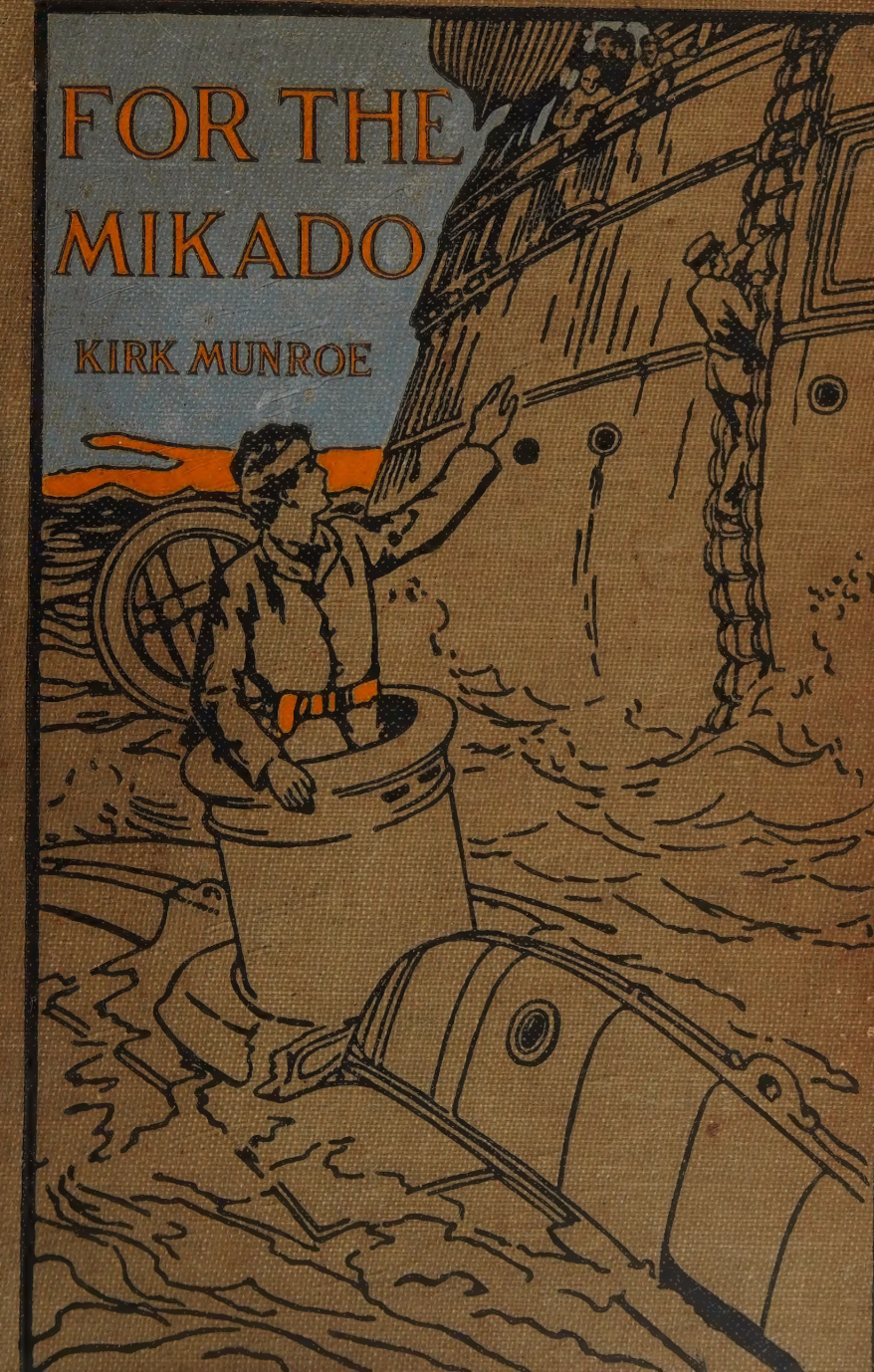
FOR THE MIKADO

KIRK MUNROE



[See p. 209

"DUNSTER BROWNLEIGH, LOOKING FROM HER CONNING-TOWER, WAS AWAITING THE COMING OF A SMALL BOAT"

For the Mikado

OR

A JAPANESE MIDDY IN ACTION

BY

Kirk Munroe

AUTHOR OF
"THE BLUE DRAGON" "FORWARD, MARCH!" "THE FLAMINGO FEATHER" "RICK DALE" "SNOW-SHOES AND SLEDGES" "THE FUR-SEAL'S TOOTH" "THE PAINTED DESERT" THE "MATES SERIES" ETC. ETC.

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THE PAINTED DESERT	THE BLUE DRAGON

UNDER THE GREAT BEAR

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FOR THE MIKADO

FOR THE MIKADO

CHAPTER I

TAKAHAKI OF HAKODATE

It was too bad that "Dun Brown" should be dropped, or allowed to resign, which was the same thing, just because he had bilged an "exam" at the close of his third year. Everybody said so—that is, almost everybody—because he was such a fine fellow, in looks, in physical strength, in his disposition, which was cheerful, though he was careless almost to recklessness, and in most of the other qualities that go to the making of a popular young naval officer. At the same time Dunster Casimir Brownleigh was a curious chap, and did many things not readily to be accounted for by outsiders.

Such a character always makes devoted friends and bitter enemies, and Dunster was no exception to this rule. There was Lawson, for instance—"Pink" Lawson, as he was called—who so admired and loved Dunster that he was perfectly willing to follow his lead in everything. On the other hand, Ethelbert Quackenbush, prize mathematician of

the class, disliked the young athlete so intensely that he would not speak to him if he could help it. At the same time he could not have given a reason for this dislike; for he would not acknowledge even to himself that he was bitterly jealous of his more brilliant classmate, and gladly would have sacrificed all his own scholarly honors for even a small portion of the other's social success.

Chief of Dunster's innumerable friends was his roommate and chum Takahaki Matsu, who, as his name indicates, was a Japanese. To many persons the intimacy existing between these two was unaccountable; for not only was Takahaki an Asiatic, but he was not of noble family, nor were his people particularly wealthy, his father being merely a well-to-do merchant of Hakodate, the metropolis of that great northern island called Yezo in the geographies, but officially known in Japan as the Hokkaido.

As Hakodate is a seaport, and greatest centre of the Japanese fishing industry, Takahaki had been familiar with boats ever since he had known anything at all, and during his boyhood had spent most of his spare time in sailing on Hakodate Bay, or battling with the fierce winds and strong currents of Tsugaru Strait outside the head. He also knew much of his native island, having, in one memorable summer, cruised entirely around it. During this cruise he had hunted bear and sea-otter with the hairy Ainu, the aboriginal inhabitants of Japan, who once occupied all of its innumerable islands,

but now, reduced to a feeble remnant, are only found in the far north.

In spite of being such a traveller, Takahaki never had been away from the Hokkaido, not even to the still larger island of Hondo that begins just across Tsugaru Strait, and, extending a thousand miles to the southward and westward, forms the main-land of Dai Nippon, the Japanese Empire.

That Takahaki had not travelled was not for lack of the desire to do so, for he ardently longed to visit the famous cities of his wide-spread island country. He dreamed of Tokio, the capital; of Yokohama, the city of foreigners; and of sacred Nikko. He wished that he might know Kioto, Osaka, and Kobe, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki. He wanted to gaze on the snow-capped crown of Fuji, the best-loved mountain of all Japan; and more than all did he wish that he might be allowed a glimpse of his revered Mikado. He wanted to see these things before he became twenty, after which he would not have much chance to travel, except as he might be ordered; for at that age every Japanese lad, rich or poor, noble or peasant, must enter either the army or the navy and serve for three years with the colors, after which, for five years more, he is attached to the Reserves, and is liable to be called upon for active duty at any moment. Already had the young Takahaki chosen his branch of service, and his application for assignment to the navy had been on file since his tenth year.

From that time on the boy had studied and work-

ed with but a single object in view. Not only did he want to serve in the splendid new navy that Japan was making every effort to set afloat and equip, but he wanted, sometime, to command a ship that should strike a fierce, telling blow for his Mikado and against the hated Russians.

Of course every school-boy in Japan knows how in 1895, or, as the Japanese say, in the twenty-seventh year of the Meiji, the Czar of Russia robbed their Mikado of the finest fruits of his great victory over China, and how, ever since that time, the same terrible Russians had been creeping closer and closer to Japan, with the hope that some day they might seize and strangle her, wiping out her national life and making her but a province of the vast, brutal empire that seeks to dominate the world. This is taught in all Japanese schools, and from the very first day of his school-life every Japanese boy is given a military drill that helps fit him for the time when he shall face the Cossack legions.

So the young Takahaki drilled and studied diligently, training both mind and body to such purpose that finally, when he was seventeen years of age, there came to him a great honor. The Mikado had decided to send abroad, for study, four lads who should be chosen by rigid examination from the school-boys of all Japan. Accordingly, word was sent out from the palace at Tokio to every corner of the empire, and two months were allowed in which to assemble, at the capital, one thousand young scholars between fifteen and eighteen years of age. From

these, four would be chosen to represent the Mikado in the leading naval schools of America, England, France, and Germany; while the ninety-six ranking next highest would be admitted to the Japanese naval academy at Yetajima, on the beautiful inland sea. According to the apportionment, but five candidates from the Hokkaido would be permitted to enter the final examinations at Tokio, and only two of these might go from Hakodate, the other chances being allotted to Saporo, Otaru, and Mororan.

When this announcement was made in Takahaki's school, and the scholars were told that every boy of the required age who chose to do so might participate in the preliminary examinations, there was great excitement. Those between fifteen and eighteen immediately became objects of envy to all who were younger or older, and at once, as a class set apart, they devoted themselves to a course of study that hardly permitted them to sleep or eat. Then followed two weeks of a weeding-out process that lessened the ranks of eager competitors by hundreds, by scores, by tens, and by individuals, until finally only two exhausted but triumphant boys were left. They were our young friend Takahaki Matsu and another.

For the time being these lads were the heroes of the city, and on the day of their departure for Tokio it seemed as though the entire population were afloat in launches or sampans to see them off. It was like starting for the front in war-time, and

Takahaki, filled with the spirit of Japanese heroes of all ages, registered a mental vow that in case of failure at Tokio he never would come back alive.

On the fine steamer *Mutsu Maru*, they crossed the broad strait separating Japan's two largest islands, and that same afternoon reached Aomori, the most northerly city of Hondo, where they were to take train for a twenty-four-hour ride to Tokio.

It was a wonderful journey to those untravelled boys: that steady, breathless rush down through the heart of old Japan, past busy cities and innumerable pretty villages, within sight of lofty mountains that gave birth to swift-flowing rivers, past ancient castles, temples, and sacred groves, through endless miles of rice-fields, tea-gardens, and orchards of stunted mulberry-trees from which millions of silkworms would be fed. It filled Takahaki with exaltation to realize that all these things belonged to his beautiful, splendid native land. Also to remember that, when he should reach Tokio, an equal extent of territory, richer, fairer, and even more populous, still lay beyond, caused him to wonder if, in all the world, there could be another country so grand and powerful as the one that he proudly called his own.

At Tokio, which has a population of two million souls, and which Takahaki believed must be the largest city of the world, our young travellers were met by an official who conducted them to the great military barracks where they were to be lodged during their second series of examinations. These

examinations extended over a week, and were conducted by army surgeons, professors, and military officials, all of whom put the lads to every test, physical and mental, that their ingenuity could devise. Day by day Takahaki's hopes sank lower and lower; for never had he imagined that even Japan could produce lads so bright and so full of knowledge as those with whom he now found himself in competition. Nor had he imagined the severity of the ordeal he now was called upon to undergo. The examinations at Hakodate, that he had regarded as so stringent, and which he had passed with such pride, seemed mere child's play when compared with those of Tokio. Long before they were concluded he gave up all hope of passing them, and only wondered by what means he should keep his vow of never returning alive to Hakodate in case of failure. He grew thin, haggard, and melancholy as the day of announcement, that was to cast nine hundred of the candidates into the depths of despair and raise four of them to heights of a heavenly bliss, drew near.

Finally, word was passed that the list of successful candidates was posted, and, trembling with apprehension until he hardly could walk, Takahaki went slowly forth to learn his fate. Other lads rushed past him in eager haste to know the result, but he could not hurry; the affair was of such vital importance to him that if his name appeared on the list, even at its very bottom, as No. 100, a life of splendid effort, devoted to the service of his Mikado, instantly would open before him. If, on the other

hand, he even were 101 on the list, he might as well have no number at all, for no longer would the world hold anything worth living for. So Takahaki moved forward slowly and irresolutely, the very last of all the candidates to approach the dreaded kamban on which the list was bulletined. As he came within sight of it he halted and stood irresolute, eagerly listening, but knowing all the while that his ears were deceiving him.

A frantic, shouting, gesticulating throng, gathered close about the bulletin-board, were uttering a single name, and it was his. At first he could not believe it; but again and again sounded the words, "Takahaki dai ichi!" (Takahaki is first.) Then they saw him, and a dozen or more ran towards him, shouting as they advanced, "Takahaki dai ichi! Dai ichi!" Of course it was incredible and impossible. They had made a mistake, or he did not understand aright; but the mere hope was so overpowering that when they reached him he lay on the ground in a dead faint, caused by the suddenness and strength of joyful reaction.

When, a little later, the lad recovered consciousness, he found himself lying on a couch of quilts in the room that he had occupied ever since reaching Tokio; but the wall in front of him had a new decoration, upon which his eyes fell the moment they opened. It was a kakemono, or scroll, and on it, in a single line from top to bottom, appeared the magic words, "Takahaki San, dai ichi" (Mr. Takahaki is first). Never before had he seen his name

with that honorable affix. Never had he been addressed as "Sir." And "Dai ichi!" It must then be true that he, the modest lad from far-away Hakodate, whose only ambition in life had been, and still was, to serve his Mikado in any capacity, no matter how humble, now was hailed as the foremost scholar of his years and the most promising boy of all Japan.

Under the stimulus of this great joy, it did not take the happy lad long to recover strength sufficient to sit up and receive the congratulations that already were pouring in from every side. Not only did those who had striven with him for the position hasten to convey assurances of their happiness at his success, but many officials came on the same pleasant errand. One of these even brought a letter written by the Mikado himself, offering congratulations.

Telegrams poured in from all parts of the empire, but especially from the Hokkaido, and from his own people, the townsfolk of Hakodate, who simply had gone wild over the honors won by their boy. They could not say their boys, for the other Hakodate lad had failed to win a place; but the glory acquired by Takahaki was sufficient to fill the far northern city with such rejoicings as, in all its history, it never before had known.

CHAPTER II

A CHEEKY PLEBE

So it happened that Takahaki, of Japan, came to America and entered the Naval Academy at Annapolis. Having passed the Tokio examinations he was required to change his school - boy dress of kimono and geta, or wooden-soled sandals, for the tight jacket, long trousers, distressingly uncomfortable leather boots, and smart cap, adorned with the imperial chrysanthemum in silver, of a Japanese naval cadet. Then, as No. 1 of all the candidates, he was given his choice of the country in which to receive his naval education, and promptly chose America; while the three having the next highest rank were appointed to the three leading countries of Europe, according to their preferences. Takahaki and one other immediately began to perfect their knowledge of the English language, the lad bound for France took up French, and the fourth boy found himself involved in a puzzled consideration of German verbs.

During the time that remained before they sailed for their several destinations, these four were quartered at the Yokosuka naval station, where they were treated with distinguished consideration Here

they made a practical study of machinery on board such ships as were in port, and at all odd moments they were seduously drilled in the tremendous physical exercises peculiar to Japan, of Jiu-jitsu, Ken-jitsu, and Botori.

Finally, after a few weeks of this pleasant life, one of them sailed away on a North German Lloyd steamer for Hamburg, another embarked on a P. & O. for London, *via* Brindisi, a third was transferred to the French liner *Yarra*, of the Messagerie Maritimes, bound for Marseilles, and the young American, as Takahaki was called, found himself on board the superb *Korea* of the Pacific Mail, steaming out of Yeddo Bay and headed towards that distant land to which, more than to any other, Japan owes her present proud position among the nations of the world.

At San Francisco, upon the completion of his five-thousand-mile voyage across the Pacific, our young traveller was met by the Japanese consul-general, who placed him on board the train for Chicago, where another consul of his own country transferred him to a Washington sleeper. At the capital he was met by the first secretary of the Japanese legation, who personally conducted him to Annapolis. There the youthful stranger from half-way round the world was kindly received by the superintendent of the Naval Academy, a man who had gained for himself an enviable reputation during the Spanish-American War.

Takahaki, having read everything he could ob-

tain concerning the Annapolis academy, knew all about this man, and regarded him with such admiring awe that, although he knew better, he instinctively dropped to his knees on being presented, and bowed his head low in token of humblest respect. It was the homage to gods and to human rulers of men that, as a child, he had been taught to render, and in the embarrassment of the moment it seemed to him the only thing to do. The instant the secretary and the superintendent realized what the young cadet was about, both sprang forward to raise him to his feet, the one ashamed that his countryman should exhibit this mark of Asiatic servility in democratic America, whose institutions Japan was striving to imitate, and the other decidedly embarrassed by the situation.

"My lad," he said, kindly, "the very first lesson I want you to learn in this place is that a free man should die rather than bend the knee to any mortal, save only those whom he regards as the direct representatives on earth of Almighty God. It is human nature to kick the man who grovels and to treat with respect the one who carries himself with uplifted head. Always salute a superior, and be prompt in returning the salutes of those who rank below you; but never bow down to the one nor allow the other to degrade himself by slavish humility. Now let us find out what you know."

The boy who had ranked highest among the seventeen-year-old scholars of Japan found no

difficulty in answering the few simple questions put to him by the superintendent, and in satisfying the latter that he was competent to hold his own among the "plebes," or members of the lowest class in the academy. As he never would be called upon to serve in the American navy, and as his own government already had deposited the sum of $10,000 to cover his expenses at the academy, no regular entrance examination was demanded in his case, and the few formalities attending his admission were quickly passed. Then he was introduced to Midshipman Dunster Casimir Brownleigh, a plebe of three months' standing.

This young gentleman was the son of a wealthy mine-owner in a Western state, and owed his academy appointment to his father's business partner, who was a member of Congress. Both Brownleigh and his roommate, a hot-blooded young Southerner, had chafed at the irksome regulations of the academy, and had so repeatedly defied them during their first three months of cadet life that the latter had been dismissed from the service, while the former was notified that he was only permitted to remain on probation, with the prospect of dismissal at any moment. As all this had happened but a few days before Takahaki's arrival, that event found Midshipman Brownleigh a rather badly frightened young man, with a damaged reputation, and without a roommate.

When, on the day of Takahaki's coming, "Dun Brown" was summoned to the presence of the

superintendent, he imagined that the fatal decree of banishment from the academy was about to be pronounced, and he obeyed the summons with forebodings. To his amazement the dreaded official greeted him with a smile, and announced that he had decided to intrust him—Dunster Brownleigh, the black sheep of his class—with a position of responsibility.

"A young Japanese, Takahaki Matsu by name, a protégé of the Mikado, just arrived in this country, has been admitted to the academy," continued the superintendent. "He will, of course, be a member of the fourth class, and as I am desirous that he begin his career under the most favorable auspices, I have assigned him to your room. Upon you, therefore, will devolve the responsibility of piloting this stranger from a strange land amid the reefs and shoals of trouble that will beset his course. First you will take him to the store-keeper for his outfit, then to the room he is to share with you. After that you may devote the remainder of the day to showing him about the grounds and buildings and introducing him to as many as possible of his classmates. Of course, while thus engaged, you will be excused from recitations and all other duties until evening study-hour, by which time I trust you will have prepared him to begin work. Now, if you will step into the next room, I will introduce you."

"Excuse me, sir," stammered Dunster, who was completely taken back by the announcement that

he had been chosen to act the part of "dry-nurse," as he mentally termed it, to a young Jap, "but does he speak any English?"

"A few words, I believe," answered the superintendent, smiling.

The next minute Dunster Brownleigh and his new roommate were, for the first time, face to face.

"Happy to meet you, Mr. Takimat," said the former, extending his hand in an embarrassed fashion to the dark-complexioned little chap, the top of whose head barely reached to his shoulder.

"The pleasure, it is for me," replied Takahaki, courteously, and without a trace of embarrassment, at the same time saluting Dunster with a profound bow.

A few minutes later, the secretary of legation having taken his departure, our two lads were crossing the grounds towards the store-keeper's office, talking as they went, and "sizing" each other up.

"How tall he is," thought Takahaki, "and what a fine-looking fellow! I do not, however, like his uniform so well as that of my own country naval cadet."

"Do you know," remarked Dunster, "that you are the very first Jap I ever met, and—"

"I beg your pardon," interrupted Takahaki, stopping short and drawing himself up very stiffly, "but it is that I ask of you to no more name a man of the Mikado as a 'Jap.'"

"Not call you a 'Jap,'" retorted Dunster, with a puzzled air—"but you are one, aren't you? What else could I call you?"

"The men of the Mikado, in Engrish, are 'Japanese,' and one must die before he submit to be said a 'Jap.' It is to him one—oh! what can I say? It is not the compriment."

"Do you mean that it is considered an insult?" asked Dunster.

"Hei, hei, yes, that is it! The insurt!" declared Takahaki, vehemently. "It is the insurt that no man of the Mikado may endure. So I ask of you, please, if you be so kind, never more to say to me that bad word 'Jap.'"

"Of course not," replied Dunster, promptly, but still puzzled by his companion's protest against a designation whose propriety he never before had heard questioned. "That is, I'll try to remember, and I promise to apologize each time that I forget and make a slip. But you mustn't take it too much to heart if some of the other fellows call you 'Jap.' Some of them may do so just to tease you, but they won't mean anything by it."

"If *one* time, some man say to me 'Jap,' I speak to him. He excuse, I excuse. If *two* time, I no excuse. It is insurt, and for honor of my Mikado I must teach him some better."

"How would you do it?" asked Dunster, curiously.

"Maybe perhaps I spit on him. Maybe perhaps I fight him till he make sorry. Anyway, I must teach him. He may say to me 'pig,' 'foolo,' what he like, I not care. It mean me, Takahaki; but if he say 'Jap,' then he mean every Nippon man. He mean my Mikado."

"Well, from your point of view, perhaps you are right," said Dunster, "though it seems to me rather a small thing to make a fuss about, and I'm afraid you will get into lots of trouble if you insist upon trying to carry out your programme."

For answer Takahaki only smiled, and began to talk of uniforms.

During that day the young Japanese met many members of the fourth class, upon whom he produced a decidedly pleasant impression, and nearly all of whom willingly agreed to refrain from using the obnoxious title of "Jap" in their future intercourse with him. Only Ethelbert Quackenbush announced that he considered it pretty cheeky for a slant-eyed heathen, from the other side of nowhere, to say what he should, or should not, be called, when he ought to be grateful at being received on any terms in white society.

Takahaki, who was talking with "Pink" Lawson at the moment, did not overhear this remark, but Dunster Brownleigh did, and was quick to resent it.

"That 'll do, Quack," he said, in a low but extremely significant tone. "The single expression of such a sentiment is sufficient. If I hear of your repeating it, or uttering any other derogatory of my friend from Japan, I shall take it as a personal insult and act accordingly."

"Oh, well," sneered Quackenbush, "if you prefer that sort of company you are welcome to it for all that I care." With this he walked away, but the breach thus opened between the two, who already

were beginning to be regarded as representative men of their class, steadily widened from that moment.

The news that a lad from the Land of the Rising Sun, just admitted to the academy, had threatened to fight any one who dared call him a "Jap," spread quickly among the cadets, and gave rise to much heated discussion in the several classes. Would he fight? Could he fight? Of course he could and would, for the Japanese notoriously are a fighting people. Nonsense! What can a little, insignificant chap like him, always bowing and smiling like a French dancing-master, know of fighting? No, the Japs are not notoriously a fighting people. They notoriously are polite and devoted to the raising of flowers. Besides, they are rice-eaters. Didn't they whip China, a nation ten times their size? Bah! Another rice-eating people. Besides, Japan's so-called war with China was only a fight with the single province of Pechili. So that proved nothing. As for standing up against a white man, no little Jap living—no nor any four of them for that matter—could do it for a minute.

Thus the discussion raged for several days, and then occurred the amazing incident that settled it forever, so far as the existing corps of cadets in the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis was concerned.

CHAPTER III

FOR THE HONOR OF JAPAN

TAKAHAKI had been an inmate of the academy about ten days, when, one evening, just before supper-call, as he was hurrying, alone, across the grounds, he was halted, and accosted by two "youngsters," or third-class men. One of them was a tall, heavily built fellow named Cyrus Snelling; while the other was a little chap of about Takahaki's own size, who had cause for grievance against his parents in that they had burdened his life with the name Ezra Eliot Lloyd, the initials whereof constituted the obvious nickname that had clung to him from earliest boyhood. So Eel he had been, Eel he was, and Eel he seemed destined to be to the end of his chapter. Nor did his physical characteristics belie this name; for not only was he so small as barely to have complied with the entrance requirement that candidates be five feet two inches tall, but he was active, slippery, and hard to catch. He was the best boxer in his class, its swiftest runner, its most artful dodger, and often was affectionately spoken of as its "Bantam Gamecock," a title that he much preferred to that of the class eel.

As these two confronted the lad from the Far East, Lloyd sang out: "Hello there, Jap! Why don't you salute your superiors?"

Takahaki's right hand, already partly raised towards his cap, suddenly dropped to his side, and he straightened himself stiffly.

"It is that I cannot permit one to say of me 'Jap,'" he replied, firmly, but courteously, and at the same time smiling pleasantly. "It is gradly permit to say of me 'Johnny Chopstick' or 'Taky-mat' or what you wish, but not the 'Jap.' If one say to me that bad name I may not sarute him, not even if he be admirar. It is insurt to every Nippon man. It is insurt to my Mikado."

"Oh, come off!" broke in Snelling. "Such talk as that can't be allowed here, even by a foreigner who may not know any better. Third-class men reserve to themselves the right to call plebes what they please, and we cannot make an exception even in your case. So you will have to submit to be called 'Jap' whether you like it or not, and the more gracefully you do so the better it will be for you. Moreover, you will at once apologize for not having saluted us, and will make us a humble bow, or suffer the consequences."

For a moment Takahaki gazed defiantly in the face of the speaker. Then without another word, but still smiling, he brushed past the "youngsters" and walked away, as though their presence were a matter of indifference to him.

"The impudence!" exclaimed Lloyd, with a mo-

tion as though to spring after the young Japanese. But Snelling laid a restraining hand on his arm.

"Hold on, Eel," he said, quietly. "This is neither the time nor place. Let him go now; but never you fear that his case won't be properly and thoroughly attended to."

"Suppose he makes a complaint that reaches the ear of the old man."

"I don't believe even a Jap would dare do such a thing here," answered Snelling, his face darkening at the suggestion. "If he should, he would be sent to Coventry by every man of every class in the academy, and the place would be made too hot to hold him."

"I'll bet he does, though," said Lloyd, as the two, whose dignity had been so set at naught by a plebe, retired from the scene of their discomfiture.

In spite of this foreboding, Takahaki neither gave warning nor made a complaint to any one. Not even to his roommate did he mention the incident. Consequently, Dunster had no intimation of what was about to take place when, a few nights later, after lights had been extinguished and the cadet officer in charge of that floor had made his final round of inspection, a gentle knock sounded on the door of the room occupied by our lads. Both of them still were awake, but before either could rise from his bed, half a dozen dark figures slipped noiselessly into the room, closing the door after them.

"Dunster Brownleigh," whispered one of the intruders, "are you here?"

"Yes. What's wanted?"

"Don't speak so loud," warned the other. "You have a Jap roommate, I believe?"

"Yes."

"Yes, sir, if you please."

"Yes, sir."

"Is he here?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then he is wanted, and so are you. We have a little business to settle with him, and desire you to come along as a witness that he is given fair play. While there are enough of us to compel you to go, we should prefer to have you come of your own accord, and under promise of silence. Will you do so? And will you make such a promise for both yourself and your friend?"

"Who are you? And where do you want us to go?" asked Dunster, hesitatingly.

"We can give you no further information here," was the stern reply. "And you must make your decision at once, as there is no time to waste. What is it—yes or no?"

"Yes, we will go with you," answered the plebe, realizing the futility of attempting to resist the number opposed to them. "That is," he added, hastily, "if my roommate agrees. Shall we go with these fellows, Taki?"

"I do what you say, Dun Brown," calmly replied the Japanese lad, who already had slipped into his clothing.

"Good!" exclaimed the leader of the intrud-

ers. "Now come along, barefoot, like us, if you please."

The door was gently opened, a cautious survey of the dimly lighted corridor was taken, and then the little party stole noiselessly from the room, each of our lads escorted by one of the visitors marching on either side of him. Out of the building they went, and, always seeking the darkest shadows, made their way swiftly, but in utter silence, to a boat-house that stood on the water's edge.

Knowing that this building was kept locked, except when used under official sanction, Dunster was surprised to see the door swing open at their approach. As they stepped inside, it was closed and locked behind them, and from a few low-voiced questions and answers our lads realized that their captors had joined forces with a number of comrades who here had awaited their coming.

A dark lantern flashed out, several others were lighted and hung in various corners of the room, and every window was carefully screened by blankets, so that no ray of light was visible from the outside. The two plebes now saw that they were surrounded by a score of masked figures, among whom they were unable to distinguish those who had brought them there from those who had awaited their coming.

"Not that we have any desire to conceal our identity from you," remarked a big man who stood near Dunster and noted his glances from one to

another of the masked figures. "But we thought it best, in case news of this meeting got out, that you and the Jap should be able truthfully to say that you did not recognize the features of a single person present."

"That was very considerate of you," replied Dunster; "and now perhaps you kindly will tell us the meaning of this tomfoolery—why we have been dragged from our beds and brought to this place, and what you intend to do with us now that you have got us here."

"This 'tomfoolery,' as you call it, is intended for a lesson to all plebes, and especially the one from Japan, who, in spite of repeated warnings, has treated certain of his seniors with marked rudeness. In fact, we consider ourselves to have been insulted by him, and now demand the satisfaction usually accorded by gentlemen."

"I suppose," said Dunster, "you mean that he must apologize for whatever he has done?"

"Exactly; and such quick discernment in a mere plebe does you great credit."

"Suppose he refuses?"

"Then he must fight."

"How many of you?"

"Only one, of course; or at least only one at a time."

"But perhaps he does not know how to fight with his fists."

"That's his lookout, not ours."

"Would I be accepted as a substitute?"

"Certainly not. You are here merely as his second, and in a case of this kind we must punish the offending party in person."

"But he is a light-weight, and small for his years."

"All the more reason why he should not put on airs and defy us. At the same time, we have considered that feature of the situation, and have chosen the smallest man of our number to chastise him."

"What do you say, Taki?" inquired Dunster, turning to his roommate, who had followed this conversation with close attention. "Will you apologize to these gentlemen for whatever it is you have done to hurt their feelings?"

"No," answered the other, promptly. "They say to me 'Jap' and order me sarute. I say I am be grad to sarute if they do not say 'Jap,' but never can I sarute when they say to me that bad word. So now it is that they must first, what you say, aporogize; then I, too, aporogize, and sarute many time."

"If you are bound to stick to that," said Dunster, dolefully, "I suppose there's nothing for it but to stand up and take your punishment. We'll fight," he added, shortly, turning to the others, who impatiently were awaiting Takahaki's decision.

"Very well," replied the big man who acted as spokesman. "Step out, Little One, and give this plebe his much-needed lesson in politeness."

At this one of the masked figures, of about the Japanese lad's own height, promptly moved to the front.

"Hold on a minute!" exclaimed the master of ceremonies. "These beastly masks interfere somewhat with seeing, so it seems to me only fair that your man should wear one of them as well as ours."

Dunster admitted the justice of this, and a strip of silk, having eye-holes cut in it similar to those worn by the others, was bound about the face of the Japanese lad.

"Now," said the big man, stepping out of the ring that had been formed, "pitch in, and may the best man win."

The next instant the young Japanese lay prone on the floor, to which he had been sent by a stinging left-hander, full in the face, that he had not attempted to parry.

"It's a shame," protested Dunster, as he assisted his roommate to rise. "Why, he didn't even put up his fists! It's evident that he don't know any more about fighting than a kitten."

"Then let him apologize," answered the big man; but ere the words were out of his mouth, Takahaki had flown at his opponent, and, unmindful of a body blow, against which he made no attempt to guard, struck out simultaneously with both right and left hands. He had not made fists, but, using the flat edge of his open hands, he delivered his blows with incredible swiftness.

A yell of pain was forced from his surprised adversary, both of whose arms dropped limp and hung at his side as useless as though broken. Nor did the young Japanese stop here, but, turning his

attention to the big man, he seized him by the left wrist and spun him around as though he had been shot. At the same moment the surprised "youngster" was impelled forward with such velocity that he dove headforemost into a group of his fellows. These were sent staggering in every direction, while the big man measured his length on the floor.

Even with this exploit Takahaki did not pause, but, darting with amazing swiftness among the remaining spectators, he administered a paralyzing grip here, a numbing blow from the edge of a hand or from an equally effective bare heel there, until he had the whole crowd wildly scrambling to avoid his bewildering attacks, which no one knew where to expect or how to meet.

The building rang with shouts and yells of pain, until suddenly the front door flew open, and above the bedlam rose the shrill cry of "Ware hawk!" In a moment the lights went out, and a few seconds later the boat-house was deserted of all its recent uproarious occupants, excepting only Takahaki, who, panting but triumphant, stood alone, wondering what was to happen next.

CHAPTER IV

HAZING AT THE ACADEMY

THE alarm that had so suddenly terminated the strange fracas in the boat-house was caused by the approach of the superintendent of the academy and a visiting friend, on their way home from the club, where they had been spending the evening. Their coming probably was most fortunate for Takahaki, who owed the success of his assault upon overwhelming numbers to its unexpectedness, the swiftness of his movements, and the novelty of his methods. As "Eel" Lloyd afterwards explained:

"He had us so rattled that we didn't know which way to look, besides having half of us paralyzed so that we couldn't wag a finger. He's a wonder, and there isn't a man in the academy, nor any two together, for that matter, who would have a living show in a scrap with him. It was mighty lucky for him, though, that the scrimmage ended when it did, for there were enough of us to eat him, and we would have had him on the run in another minute. At the same time, as I said, he's a wonder, and we must get him on the team."

So Takahaki was doubly fortunate in having temporarily put to flight his assailants, and then in hav-

ing them driven from the field just as they were about to overcome his peculiar tactics by weight of numbers. He had not comprehended the significance of the warning cry that caused their sudden disappearance, consequently he stood in the doorway puzzling over it and wondering what he ought to do, when the superintendent stepped briskly up with the disconcerting inquiries:

"What is going on here, sir? Who are you? and what are you doing here at this time of night?"

As the officer spoke he struck a match that lighted the scene with a momentary glare.

"I am Takahaki Matsu," answered the Japanese lad, standing stiffly at attention, with his hand raised in salute. "I am something not doing."

"Do you mean that you are not doing anything?"

"Yes, sir. I am anything not doing."

"Why, then, are you here?"

"Because some mans make me to come."

"Who were they?"

"I am not see any of his faces."

"Why are you wearing that mask?"

"The mans who make me to come make me to wear him."

"What were you doing here just now?"

"We are have game, Japan game; name jiu-jitsu."

At this the superintendent's companion gave an audible chuckle.

"Were any of your classmates present?" asked the commanding officer.

Takahaki hesitated for a moment before answering: "Yes, sir. Dun Brown, who room I with, was come same time. Mans make him to come."

"Very well, sir. You may return to your room, where both you and Cadet Brownleigh will consider yourselves under arrest until I send for you in the morning. Also, you will report that fact to the cadet officer in charge of your hall. Good-night."

"It looks to me," said the superintendent to his friend, after Takahaki had disappeared, "as though something in the nature of hazing had been attempted, and I have no doubt that a number of third-class men are implicated. If I find out that such is the case, and can discover the offenders, it will go hard with them, for hazing is a form of brutality that I am determined to crush out at any cost."

"If any one, or any half-dozen unsophisticated 'youngsters' attempted to haze that Jap, and he resisted with jiu-jitsu methods, I'd be willing to wager that he did not get the worst of the encounter," laughed the other, who was a naval officer just returned from a long tour of duty in the Far East. "Recently I have seen enough of jiu-jitsu in Japan to convince me that one skilled in its tricks can successfully defend himself against an apparently overwhelming number of opponents, physically stronger than he but ignorant of his peculiar art of self-defence. It is something that should be taught here, and, if that young fellow proves an expert, you couldn't do better than to appoint him jiu-jitsu instructor of his class."

"Perhaps so," replied the superintendent. "At any rate, I will consider your suggestion."

In the mean time, Takahaki had returned unmolested to his room, where, after reporting to the cadet officer in charge, he found Dunster already in bed, but awake and anxiously awaiting him.

"Awfully glad to see you, old man," said the latter, in a low tone. "Was afraid you were nabbed. Did you find out who it was that gave us the scare? Some one said that it was the super himself."

"Yes," replied Takahaki. "Him superintendent, and say we are arrest."

"So he caught you, did he? But how did he know that I was mixed up in the row? Did you tell him?"

"Yes. Him ask if any prebe in the boat-house, and I say not any but Dun Brown."

"The dickens you did! Well, I must say I didn't think it of you! I suppose you gave him the names of all the others, too?"

"No, I say cannot see face."

"But of course you did recognize certain men by their voices?"

"Maybe so. Maybe I know—"

"Hold on! Don't give me any names. I don't want to know who they were, and if you know what's good for yourself you won't remember any of them to-morrow, either. But, I say, that was great work you did in downing those chaps. Where did you learn the trick? and how did you do it, anyhow?"

"Him what Japan man name jiu-jitsu. Everybody in my country know him."

"Well, nobody in this country does, so far as I know, and I'd like mighty well to learn the game. Will you teach me?"

"Yes, me be grad teach you, Dun Brown, everything what I know."

"That settles it, and I'm yours for lessons every chance we get, for it's mighty well worth while to know how one man may handle a crowd the way you did awhile ago. I'll bet those fellows feel sick over it, and I don't believe they'll tackle us again in a hurry, especially if you put me onto the game."

"Au right, Dun Brown, I teach you." And, satisfied with this promise, Midshipman Brownleigh went to sleep, without a care as to what the morrow might bring forth.

The next morning both lads were summoned to the superintendent's office immediately after roll-call.

When that officer had listened, with closest attention, to Cadet Brownleigh's frank account of the boat-house affair, he abruptly asked:

"Who were the men who took you from your room?"

"As they were masked, sir, I could not identify them," replied the plebe.

"Didn't you recognize any of their voices?"

"Not to swear to, sir."

"But you have your suspicions as to who they were?"

"Yes, sir, some of them."

"Who were they?"

"I would rather not mention any names, sir."

"What if I order you to do so?"

"I should be very sorry to disobey orders, sir."

"To do so would render you liable to severe punishment, probably to dismissal from the academy."

"Yes, sir."

"And I am certain to discover the guilty parties, sooner or later."

"Not through me, sir."

"Perhaps through your roommate, then. How is it, Matsu? I suppose you have no objection to giving me the names of any whom you recognized among those who attempted to discipline you last night?"

"Yes, sir," replied the Japanese lad, somewhat puzzled by the form of the question.

"You know, of course, who it was that struck you in the face?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who was it?"

"Honorable sir, I am not say."

"You mean you will not?"

"It is the same."

"Oh no, it isn't. If you cannot, on account of ignorance, then you are blameless, and not liable to any penalty; but if you will not, through obstinacy, then it is possible that you should be sent back, in disgrace, to your own country."

Takahaki's face became very grave.

"So, of course, under the circumstances, you will no longer hesitate to give me the name of the person who struck you in the face last night. By so doing you will not only escape further unpleasant consequences, but you will relieve your roommate from the penalty he otherwise must pay for being mixed up in an affair that should concern you only."

"Honorable sir, I not can. In my country it is not custom, and now I find it not custom here. I am very sorry, but if I do such thing never more can I go back to my peop. No, honorable sir, I cannot."

So evidently was this answer final that there was no more to be said, and ten minutes later found both our lads in solitary confinement on board the *Santee*, digesting the information that they would thus remain until the real culprits should be discovered.

In a small community of few but intense interests, news of this kind cannot be kept from spreading. Thus, within an hour, it was known to every member of the academy, cadets as well as officers, that two plebes were under arrest and threatened with dismissal for refusing to divulge the names of certain parties who had attempted to haze them the night before. Also it was known that one of them was the young Japanese, whose recent advent into the academy had occasioned so much speculation. It even was rumored that the entire party of would-be hazers had been whipped out of their boots and put to flight by the unaided efforts of this one little brown man from the Far East, but, of course, this story was not believed.

In the mean time, third-class-men Snelling and Lloyd had sought and been granted an interview with the superintendent, and after that, at various hours during the day, they were seen in earnest conversation with certain of their classmates. It was obvious that something important was on hand, but just what no one seemed to know. Thus matters stood at the hour of dress parade, just before sunset, when the entire corps of cadets, together with every officer of the academy and a large number of spectators, were assembled in the long shadows of the elms that border the grassy plain of the drill-ground.

The parade was ended; the drill, both in manual and evolution, had been perfect; the superb academy band had completed its imposing march up and down the extended line of motionless cadets; officers had reported, and apparently the moment for dismissal had arrived, when the superintendent stepped towards the waiting cadets with an expression on his face that betokened an occasion of grave importance. At the same moment appeared a squad of marines, in charge of a corporal, and guarding two prisoners. These advanced steadily until within a few paces of the superintendent, where they halted and stood as though awaiting orders.

CHAPTER V

JIU-JITSU METHODS

"It is well known to every one of you," said the superintendent, addressing the cadet battalion, standing at attention before him, "that the breach of academy discipline most obnoxious to me is that form of brutality known as hazing. Generally this is practised upon inexperienced new-comers by those who are older and stronger. Moreover, the hazers, imbued with the true spirit of cowardice, take care to be in such overwhelming numbers that their victims have no opportunity for successful resistance to their demands. An affair of this kind was planned for last night, when the selected victim was the very latest arrival at the academy, Cadet Matsu, who comes to us as a protégé of the Emperor of Japan, and who, by all rules of courtesy, should be treated with the especial consideration due a guest. Instead of this he has been, from the very first, hailed by a designation that is particularly obnoxious to him, because he regards it as insulting to his countrymen, including the Mikado, whom he reveres above all created beings. In every instance he has carefully explained this to those using the offensive term, and courteously has re-

quested them not to repeat it. I am happy to state that in most cases this entirely proper request has been respected. In one instance, however, it was contemptuously ignored, whereupon Cadet Matsu very properly refused to salute those persons who thus declared their intention of continuing to insult his Mikado through him. For this act of defiance he shortly afterwards was dragged from his bed at midnight by a score of masked men, and, with his roommate, was removed to a vacant building, where he was required to make humble apology for his alleged offence. Failing to do so, he would receive, at the hands of his captors, such physical punishment as they deemed adequate. Choosing, without hesitation, the latter alternative, as I trust every one of you would do under like circumstances, Cadet Matsu, unfamiliar with American methods of boxing, promptly was knocked down. In another moment the victim of this assault had regained his feet, and, adopting Japanese methods of self-defence, not only had whipped his direct assailant and that young gentleman's second, a man half again as big as himself, but actually had the entire party of would-be hazers on a mad scramble for safety from his furious and incomprehensible attack. What the final outcome of this extraordinary battle would have been must be left to the imagination, for at that point it suddenly was interrupted by the approach of two officers who happened to be strolling in that direction. When these reached the building they found

Cadet Matsu to be its sole occupant. In answer to inquiries, he only would say that he and his roommate, Cadet Brownleigh, had been brought to that place, against their will, by a party of masked men, and induced to participate in a certain Japanese game. Placed under arrest, and brought before me for examination this morning, cadets Matsu and Brownleigh communicated all the facts in the case, but refused to divulge the name of any other person implicated in the affair, although informed that by taking such a stand they rendered themselves liable to dismissal from the academy. As it was, they were ordered into close confinement until such time as their assailants should be discovered or a final decision in their case should be rendered.

"I am happy to state that, almost immediately upon this condition of affairs becoming generally known, I received a visit from two third-class men, who acknowledged themselves to be the persons who had applied the offensive term to Cadet Matsu, the instigators of the attempt to punish him, and the principals throughout the whole affair. Having thus confessed, they stated that they had done so with the hope that they might be allowed to take the place of the two fourth-class men then confined on board the *Santee*, and that the latter might be given their freedom.

"I replied that, while they certainly would be punished for their share in the attempt at hazing, I could not release the prisoners in whose behalf they appeared until I had the name of every man

concerned in the disgraceful affair of last night, and asked if they were prepared to furnish them. They replied that they were not, but said that, if allowed a few hours, they believed they could persuade every one of those who had been in the boat-house to make personal acknowledgment of the fact. This proposition was accepted, and now we are to learn of its success or failure. Midshipman Snelling, have you and Midshipman Lloyd succeeded in your undertaking?"

"We have, sir," answered the cadet thus addressed.

"Then I am about to request every man implicated in the attempted hazing of Midshipman Matsu to step to the front. At the same time, I give due warning that a certain punishment awaits each one thus making confession, and that, as a preliminary to it, he will be required to salute Midshipman Matsu, which act will be regarded as an apology for the past and a promise for the future. Hazers! Forward, march!"

Amid a breathless silence, and under the curious gaze of the entire assemblage, a score of third-class men stepped a few paces to the front, where they were halted and formed in line.

The heart of the superintendent swelled with pride as he gazed on these sturdy young Americans thus proving themselves willing to undergo an ignominious punishment to right and relieve those who, otherwise, would suffer for their fault. But duty required him to repress this feeling and con-

tinue to exhibit official sternness. So, instead of exclaiming, as he would like to, "My dear lads, I am very proud of you!" he said:

"So far, good, and I am gratified by the spirit manifested in this public confession of wrong-doing. Now I request that each one of you, as his name is called, advance to within two paces of Midshipman Matsu, halt, salute him, and then continue to the position occupied by the marine guard, where he will consider himself as under arrest."

This command, issued in the form of a request, was obeyed to the letter, each one of the hazers, as his name was called, stepping briskly forth, saluting Takahaki, who stood by himself, the observed of all, and then yielding himself to the marines, who waited to receive him. The young Japanese, though inwardly trembling with nervousness at the publicity thus given him and his affairs, did not betray his feelings, but, standing in the rigid attitude prescribed by regulation, punctiliously received and returned each salute as it was rendered. At the same time he heaved a sigh of relief when, with this ceremony of reparation ended, he and his roommate, no longer under arrest, were permitted to resume their places in the ranks. As they did so the third-class men who had just begged his forgiveness for attempting to haze him were marched away towards the *Santee*, on board which they were to undergo twenty-four hours of solitary confinement. In addition to this punishment, each received so many demerits as to keep him conspicu-

ously upon his good behavior during the remainder of the year, in order to avoid gaining the very few more that would dismiss him from the academy.

As one result of the episode thus happily ended, Takahaki Matsu, commonly and affectionately known to his mates as "Johnny Chopsticks," was never again called "Jap" by any person at that time connected with the Annapolis academy. Another result was his receipt of an invitation, from the captain of the academy football team, to become a candidate for place with that august body.

This invitation was not sent until after much discussion by the managing committee of the academy athletic association. Some of the members declared that the little Japanese was too small of stature and too light of frame to withstand the shock of even a moderate scrimmage, much less the tremendous struggles of a big game.

"He may be quick enough," said one, "but so's a dicky-bird, and what becomes of the most agile of dicky-birds when he meets with a flight of hawks?"

It happened that the officer who had walked home from the club with the superintendent on the night of the recent attempt at hazing, and who was noted in naval circles as an all-around athlete, was present as a guest at this meeting of the committee. He listened with interest to all that was said for and against the issuing of an invitation to Takahaki to try for the team, until it became evident that an adverse decision was about to be reached; then he

begged the privilege of making a few remarks. This being granted, he said:

"Gentlemen, during a recent tour of duty in Japan I was accorded the privilege of inspecting the institution which, in that country, takes the place of this academy with us. I mean the Japanese naval school at Yetajima, on the Inland Sea. Of course, this is a place of intense interest to an Annapolis man, and, naturally, I found myself instituting comparisons between its methods and ours. In many respects they are similar, though the Japanese instructors devote more time to practice and less to theo y than we do; but in the department of physical culture there is a striking difference. The Yetajima cadets have no gymnasium, no football team, no baseball, none of our athletic games. In place of them they have jiu-jitsu (pronounced joo-jits), ken-jitsu, and botori—three methods of muscular development which, taken together, produce the most marvellous results I ever have witnessed. The first is a form of wrestling, based upon an intimate knowledge of human anatomy, in which the wrestlers are instructed not only how to reduce opponents to instant submission by grips, twists, or blows that, if carried a degree further, would result in dislocated or fractured bones, and how to give the most tremendous falls, but they are taught how to receive similar falls without serious injury. Ken-jitsu is a violent form of single-stick fencing, in which no manner of attack is barred. But of all these stal-

wart athletics, the fiercest is botori, which in itself combines the most sensational features of a free fight and a football scrimmage on a large scale. The game is played, or rather the battle is fought, on the broad plain of the drill-ground, between opposing forces of several hundred men. One-half of each side is detailed for attack, while the other half remains to defend from assault a stout, eight-foot pole, held upright, with one end on the ground. At a signal the attacking forces rush past each other with loud cries, and each charges furiously the opposite body of pole defenders. The result is about the hottest fighting, outside of actual warfare, that I ever have witnessed. Everything being permitted, including blows, and all forms of tackle, the most wonderful feature of botori is that serious injuries from it are almost unknown. From early childhood, toughened and taught to protect themselves by jiu-jitsu methods, those Japanese boys simply can't be knocked out by anything short of sledge-hammers.

"Now, gentlemen, I have told you these things for the sake of adding that, with the chance of placing a Japanese jiu-jitsu player on your football team you also are given the opportunity to make the name of that team respected on every gridiron of the country."

So earnest was the speaker and so impressive were his remarks, that hardly had he resumed his seat before the committee on athletics unanimously decided that Takahaki Matsu should be invited to try for the academy team.

CHAPTER VI

WHY DUN BROWN HATED RUSSIANS

Dunster Brownleigh, having been a football player ever since he learned to walk, had made the navy team, as a matter of course, and from the first had been known as one of its most promising players. It was he who had suggested that, in spite of his light weight, Takahaki might prove a valuable acquisition, and, when an invitation to try for the eleven finally came to his roommate, Dunster was jubilant over the success of his plan.

"Of course you will accept it!" he cried to the Japanese lad, who thoughtfully was staring at the note he had just read aloud. "You don't have to write an answer, you know, but just show up and report at this afternoon's practice. I'll introduce you, and the coaches will soon find out what you are good for."

"But I may not go," suggested Takahaki, looking up from his note. "I am not sure that it would be the right thing for me to do."

"Not the right thing to do!" gasped Dunster. "Why, man! it's about the greatest honor that can be offered to a plebe. Even third-class men consider the eleven the best thing within reach, and try for

all they are worth to make it. You can't refuse it! You simply can't! To do so would be your social ruin. You'd never be put up for another place or asked to go in for anything again, unless it might be one of the lit. societies or some other mind-improvement scheme."

"That might be the best for me," responded the young Japanese, gravely. "It is for that mind improvement that I am here. I was not sent here to play games; but it is for study that I am come, so that one day I may have the knowledge how to fight and sink the ships of the White Czar, whose mouth ever is open for devouring my country. No, my friend, it is not to play amusing games that I am come to America, but it is to learn how to fight the Rus-si-an, according to the best methods of the best fighting people in the world."

"Thanks, old man! That is a very pretty compliment. But what do you mean by talking of fighting Russians? I have not heard that Japan and Russia are at war."

"Not yet are they at war. But sometime will they be; for Russia is creeping, creeping, ever creeping eastward, with an eye of desire fixed upon Japan, like a great cat, with death and destruction in her heart, creeping towards a bird. However, my country knows her danger, and is preparing to meet it. When all is ready, then will there be war with Russia."

"And you will be in it?" asked Dunster, enviously.

"If I am alive, I shall be in it," replied Takahaki, quietly.

"While I sha'n't," said the former, in such a despondent tone that his roommate looked up inquiringly.

"No, why should you be?" he asked. "You are American, and Americans are friendly to Russia, as also they are to my country."

"Some Americans may love Russia, but others hate her. I am one of the others," replied Midshipman Brownleigh, his dark face flushing and his eyes glistening. "Also I was born with the right to hate those who made slaves of my own people. Listen:

"My mother is a Pole. Her father, my own grandfather, was Count Casimir, of Warsaw, a descendant of Polish kings. It is in memory of him that I am named Casimir. He fought against Russia for the liberty of Poland. For that his estates were confiscated, and he was reduced to such poverty that he became a teacher in the university. The Czar issued an order forbidding the use of the Polish language in the schools of Poland, and proclaiming that only Russian must be taught or spoken. My grandfather defied this order, and continued to use in his class-room the tongue that was his and his students', by right of birth. Also he secretly taught some of them English, the speech of a free people.

"About this time, also, he married a girl of his own rank and of equal poverty. Shortly after this marriage, without warning, the house of the Count

Casimir was entered at night by a squad of soldiers, and he was torn from the arms of his bride, who was struck senseless to the floor. When she regained consciousness she was alone, nor did she ever again see her husband. Only once did she hear from him. Two nights after his arrest something was tossed through the open window of her room. It was a small block of wood, hollowed to the centre, and containing a note, evidently hastily scrawled with a splinter dipped in blood. It bade her flee to America, that her child might be born in a free country, and it was signed with the pet name that only she had ever called her husband. How it came to her she never knew, nor did she learn certainly the fate of my grandfather, but it was rumored that he was exiled for life to the Siberian mines.

"By the aid of friends the Countess Casimir came to America, where soon afterwards my mother was born. My grandmother lived long enough to impress her sweet, sad face on my memory, and to show me the note, written in her husband's blood, which she kept in a tiny silver box and regarded as her most precious treasure. Now my mother has it, and some day it will be mine. If my grandfather still lives, he is a lash-driven slave, toiling amid the horrors of remotest Siberia. Have not I, as well as you, the right to hate Russia?"

"It is so," replied Takahaki, who had listened with intense interest to this pathetic tale of Russian outrage. "You have the right, and we are of

one mind. But," he added, smiling, "before we talked of Russia we spoke of the ball of the foot game, and I was telling you why I might not play him."

"Of course we were," interrupted Dunster, "and you were giving me the best reason in the world why you should go in for the team, now, at once, with all your heart and soul."

Takahaki's face showed his amazement at this assertion, but he politely remained silent until his companion should finish speaking.

"You said," continued Dunster, "that Russians were your enemies, and that some day you hoped for the chance to fight them. Well, by getting on the team you can have that chance at once, or at least in a very short time."

Takahaki's narrow eyes opened wide with amazement.

"Yes, I am giving it to you straight," said Dunster, noting the other's expression, "and it's this way. You know, or, rather, of course you don't know, though any one would who has followed academy football, that, next to West Point, the L—— University team—'Lu-Lu's' we call them—always put up the stiffest game on our schedule. Last year we beat them—"

"But last year you were not of this place," protested Takahaki.

"No, but I expected to come, and so, of course, kept tab on all gridiron doings in any way connected with the academy."

Takahaki looked puzzled.

"So you see I knew all about the Lu-Lu's. This year we heard, more than a month ago, that they had something in pickle for us; but we have only just found out what it is."

"What is it?" asked Takahaki, curiously.

"It is a giant," answered Dunster — "the biggest man ever seen on an American college team. They claim that he can pick up any two of our men and carry them off one under each arm. Of course no one believes that yarn, but, from all accounts, he is a holy terror, and—"

"They keep him in a *pickle*, this giant?" murmured Tahahaki, reflectively.

"Oh, that's just a figure of speech, you know. It means that he's lying low, and they are trying not to give him away. But what I was going to say is that—"

"Also you say that he is a holy man!" continued Takahaki, his bewilderment over these novelties of English speech momentarily getting the better of his politeness. "Is he, then, a priest?"

"Worse than that," laughed Dunster. "He is a Russian."

"A Rus-si-an?"

"Yes, a Russy-an," laughed Dunster. "Came to this country to study mechanical engineering in all its branches, undoubtedly with the intention of using the knowledge thus gained against your country when you two get to scrapping. Also" —and here Casimir Brownleigh's face darkened

monarch—"his name is Sweatrow Sweatrowitch, and he is a direct descendant of the butcher Sweatrow who, a little more than one hundred years ago, murdered a cityful of my mother's people—thirty-five thousand of them, men, women, and little children, unarmed and defenseless, who had surrendered with Warsaw, the capital of Poland."

"Perhaps also this Lo-lo man, this holy giant, this Russian, would like to do that same thing with my city of Hakodate," suggested Takahaki, quietly.

"Undoubtedly he would," answered Midshipman Brownlegh, promptly, thereby voicing a most unreserved reflection upon the character of the present Mr Sweatrow.

"I think I will be happy if I make one of what you call the ballfoot team," said Midshipman Mason, and from that moment Dawson felt certain that the new recruit was slated to do things that would cause comment.

That very day Takahaki reported for practice, and was promptly set to work under the direct supervision of his recent enemy, third-class man Lloyd. Of course, as he never had even seen a football game, he proved to be the most awkward member of the entire awkward squad; and at the end of the practice hour he confided to Dan Brown, who had been hard at work in another part of the field, that of all the strange things he had encountered in America this play of the "ballfoot" was the most bewildering.

"Every time when I try and do something right I find I do him wrong," he said despondently. "To get that ball, if I was at a man, whom always I try to think of as a Prussian, and knock him down or trip him up, somebody cry: 'Foul! For shame!' and I may not have that ball. If I run up behind, to take that ball away, when he is not knowing, some other body yell: 'Kill! Kill side! Drop him, Johnny!' and again I may not have that ball. Also I hear one man call very bad many names. It is told that all nations have meaning, and at same time that only one or two of it mean something. So, if I try do that thing what all nations mean, I do not anything, and if I am try do what thing one number mean, it always must be wrong thing. Yes, all of it is very impossible for Nippon man."

Dunbar roared with laughter at this description of the Jap's perfect experience as a football player, but finally he managed to say: "Of course it is possible. Taki; but you are all right, and you'll catch on after a bit. Why I heard Lloyd say that you were a corker."

Midshipman Lloyd had made use of that very expression in describing the afternoon's work to the captain of the team, Dunbar; but what he said was:

"I tell you, Cy, the Jap's a corker in a scrimmage, perfect little daredevil, not afraid of anything or anybody, and he gets there every time without a wrench; but he's a dodger from the word go, and unless his methods can be changed there isn't an

umpire but what would rule him out at the first tackle."

Thus it seemed that Takahaki had quite as much to unlearn as to learn in order to become an acceptable football player. So perhaps it was a good thing, all around, that at the very beginning of the season an imperative order from the Secretary of the Navy forbade the playing of any match games by the Annapolis team of that year.

CHAPTER VII

A FORBIDDEN GAME

THE Secretary's order against the playing of match games by the navy football team created dismay at the academy, and was discussed with many angry comments.

"Afraid we'll get dinted, or have our paint scratched, I suppose," said Dun Brown, scornfully. "Regards us as government property, too good for use, to be kept in storage until it rots or becomes a back number. The idea of the American navy being under the thumb of an old mollycoddle like that! It is enough to disgust one with the whole business, and I wish I were well out of it."

Midshipman Matsu, to whom these remarks were addressed, in the privacy of their jointly occupied room, and who was equally disappointed with his chum at being denied an opportunity to meet a Russian on the field of battle, concealed his feelings beneath a placid smile as he answered:

"But he must have some good reason, this wise man, or he would not do such a thing; and for us it is to obey without question."

The Secretary of the Navy did have a good reason; and, strangely enough, Dunster himself had fur-

nished it by writing home a glowing description of the remarkable fighting tactics of his new room-mate. "He is teaching me joo-jits," the letter continued, "and the two of us are going to lay for the Lu-Lu's centre-tackle, a Russian giant wearing the pleasantly suggestive name of Suwarrow. If we don't make a stiff of that fellow, then I lose my guess, that's all."

While Mrs. Brownleigh had no personal acquaintance with Russians, from earliest childhood she had heard such tales of their cruelty and ferocity that to her they were the most terrible beings in all the world; and the thought of her darling boy preparing to fight one of them, whom he himself described as a giant, bearing a name synonymous with savagery, was unbearable. Acting upon impulse, therefore, she carried her trouble to her husband's business partner, the gruff old Congressman who always had been her stanch friend. He never had played football, never even had seen it played; but, from the casual reading of newspaper accounts, he had gathered the idea that, from every game several men were borne away dead or disabled for life. Thus he was in a mood to sympathize with the distressed mother, and readily promised to see what could be done.

It happened that this particular Congressman was chairman of a House committee that, more than any other, controlled naval appropriations. Also it happened that the Secretary of the Navy, just then was planning to ask for an unusually large

sum of money during the coming session of Congress. Consequently, when he received, from the man upon whose influence the success of his pet scheme most largely depended, a request that football be forbidden at Annapolis, the Secretary did not hesitate very long before issuing the necessary order.

"It is tough on the boys," he reflected, as he signed this order, "and they will hate me for it; but in this case the end justifies the means, and some day they will know how it is themselves."

Although, on account of this order, the Annapolis team was compelled to cancel its engagements for the first month of that season, its members by no means abandoned hope of so presenting their side of the question to the Secretary as to persuade him to revoke the obnoxious decree before November. In this hope they were encouraged by Dunster Brownleigh, who, at a meeting held in Midshipman Snelling's room for an informal discussion of the situation, declared that, through a relative (he meant his godfather) who was devoted to him, and who at the same time was absolute owner of a certain high official at Washington, he believed he could procure a recall of the hateful order.

"It is such a sure thing," he added, earnestly, "that I should be very sorry to see the team disband or even to let up on its work. Some of those outside Johnnies, and especially the Lu Lu's, are giving us the loud ha ha just now. They are saying that the Secretary would never have

issued such an order had he not realized that the navy team of this year was N. G. and certain to be whipped out of its boots by every fresh-water college that it played. So my idea is that we want to keep up a full head of steam and be ready to sail in for all we are worth the minute time is called, as it surely will be within a few days."

"You see it is this way," Dunster confided to his roommate that night: "My mother never is so happy as when she is attempting the apparently impossible to please me. Also I have a godfather with whom she is very chummy, and who delights in doing things she wants him to do. He's a funny old party, but about as fine as they make 'em, though you'd never think it to look at him. Furthermore, my godfather is in Congress. Hence these tears; or, in other words, that is how I happen to be sharing a room with Takahaki, from Hakodate, here in Annapolis, at this moment. Now, whatever godpapa says is listened to with respect in Washington, because, being chairman of an appropriation committee, he holds a pass-key to the Treasury, which makes him king-pin, as it were, over all the other little tin gods. Thus enlightened, you readily will note the sequence. Whenever I consider a change in existing conditions advisable for the good of the service, I merely call up mother. She gets godpapa on the wire, he passes the news on to the powers that be, they 'phone his, hers, my wishes down here, the circuit is closed, and the good work is done. This is as it has been, as it

should be, and as I have every reason to believe it will be in the present emergency. So just you peg away at your game, Johnny, and we'll get the chance to do up friend Suwarrow yet."

Upheld by Dun Brown's cheering conviction that the weight of influence being exerted in their behalf, must speedily prevail, the team devoted itself to practice with renewed energy. Takahaki mastered the rudiments of the game, and bade fair to become a star player, while the team, as a whole, was spoken of as the best the academy had turned out for many years. Still, the coveted permission to test their abundant strength and skill in open conflict failed to arrive; and at length, with the waning season, their high spirits began to flag.

November came, and with a heavy heart Captain Snelling cancelled all dates for the remainder of that season. Then he sent in his resignation. He wrote that he could not afford to waste any more time over a hopeless proposition, and advised that football be stricken from the list of athletic games played at the academy.

While the captain's resignation was accepted, his advice raised such a storm of discussion that the question of permanently retiring from the "gridiron" was reserved for a subsequent meeting. Dunster Brownleigh was the most ardent among those who proposed to maintain their organization, and to continue indefinitely their efforts to gain a new ruling in favor of their beloved sport.

"It's bound to come," he declared, vehemently.

"I've already received notice that our friends are at work and that things are looking our way. We'd be no better than chumps if we gave up now."

The notice that Midshipman Brownleigh claimed to have received had come in the form of a letter from his mother, in which she promised to speak about the football situation to his Congressman godfather as soon as the latter returned from a vacation trip to the Pacific coast that he then was taking.

Now it happened that during his Western journey, which carried him as far north as Victoria, British Columbia, the Congressman saw in that city his first game of football, and was delighted with the graceful skill of the players. There was no slugging, nobody got hurt, and the whole affair seemed to him about as harmless as a game of croquet, though infinitely more exciting. He was not told that the game that he witnessed was played under Association, rather than under Americanized Rugby, rules, nor would he have known the difference if this information had been vouchsafed. From that hour football to him assumed a most kindly aspect, and he was sorry he had ever uttered a word against so innocent a game.

When next he met Mrs. Brownleigh, and that fond mother, fortified by the knowledge sadly conveyed in a recent letter from her boy, that all football games scheduled for that season had been cancelled, admitted that, after all, football might not be so dangerous as she had imagined, the Congressman promptly wired the Secretary of the Navy:

"Have been studying athletic games. Find football grand exercise. Believe it should be made special feature of naval training."

The Secretary's face assumed a vastly relieved expression as he read this change-of-heart message. He had been greatly worried by the numerous condemnations of his recent order against football received from all parts of the country, as well as by requests, almost amounting to demands, that it be revoked. Now he saw a chance for gaining many political friends by allowing each of his critics to imagine that *his* presentation of the case had caused the head of the navy to change his mind.

An order restoring football to its former status promptly was forwarded to the Naval Academy, read at evening parade, and greeted with rousing cheers from the entire battalion the moment parade was dismissed.

A few minutes later, at a hastily called special meeting of the academy team, Midshipman Dunster C. Brownleigh was unanimously elected to the vacant captaincy, an honor never before accorded to a plebe. An animated consultation between the new captain and members of the athletic committee resulted in the immediate sending out of half a dozen telegraphic challenges to as many college teams. The very next day it generally was known that, late as was the season, two games had been arranged. On Thanksgiving Day West Point would play the Navy at Philadelphia, and three days later the L—— University team, the victorious

Lu-Lu's, who already had defeated West Point, would visit Annapolis.

"You surely have run up against it hard," said ex-Captain Snelling, shaking his head, and speaking to Captain Brownleigh.

The moment there was a prospect of a game the big man had volunteered to play in his old position of centre-tackle, and the offer had gladly been accepted.

"West Point will give us all we want to handle," he continued, "and to play the Lu-Lu's only three days later is to invite almost certain defeat."

"I know it," replied Dunster, "but there is nothing else to be done. We simply must meet those fellows, and the 30th is the only date they can give us."

"Well, of course we'll play for all we're worth; but the outlook is squally for navy blue."

CHAPTER VIII

TAKAHAKI FACES THE FOE

THE great Thanksgiving game between Annapolis and West Point, witnessed by ten thousand spectators, including a special train-load of army and navy people from Washington, resulted in a tie of six to six, each side scoring a touch-down and a goal. There was a strong wind blowing down the field, and the goal in each case was made by the team having it behind them. There were many brilliant plays, and so much desperate fighting in scrimmages that both sides were pretty well done up at the conclusion of the game. From it, however, West Point went home very well content; for their information concerning the strength of the Navy team had caused them to fear a crushing defeat at its hands. Annapolis, on the other hand, retired from the battle in a despondent frame of mind. Cy Snelling, their heaviest man, had a dislocated ankle, and so, of course, was out of the L—— University game that must be played three days later. Also the L. U.'s had defeated West Point eleven to six, while Annapolis only had tied the score.

And what had Takahaki done in this, his first match game? He simply had succeeded in getting

himself ruled off the field at the very beginning of the first half, on the charge of striking a foul blow. He was making a beautiful run with the ball, dodging would-be tacklers in a manner to rouse the envy of "Eel" Lloyd himself. Only one man remained between him and a touch-down, and the young Japanese warded off his interference with an open-handed defence that was so effective as to leave the other for a moment incapable of further effort. He at once claimed to have been struck by a clinched fist; and an umpire, judging wholly from the effect of the blow, allowed the claim, thereby disqualifying Takahaki from further play during that game.

Captain Brownleigh vigorously protested against this decision, but with so little effect that Takahaki, muffled in an ulster, was compelled to view the remainder of the struggle from the side lines. Smarting under the unfairness of his treatment, sitting there alone, and as he thought unnoticed, he was extremely unhappy. Why had he allowed himself to be tempted to join in this silly game, so cumbered with rules that one might as well be blindfolded and have his hands tied behind him? If it only were botori, unhampered by regulations of any kind, how he could enjoy the mad rush and fierce struggle! But this football, with its umpires eager to rule one off the field if he so much as lifted a hand against an opponent. Bah! It was a game for girls or little children, and he would have no more of it.

All at once the lad's bitter musings were inter-

rupted by a scrap of conversation that came to him from the bleachers but a few feet away.

"It is a fool thing to allow a dwarf like that on a football team where he must meet real men, and it is well for him that he was ruled out before he got smashed like a grasshopper," said a harsh voice.

"Oh, I don't know!" replied another. "It seemed to me that he was doing first-class work, and was in a fair way to make his touch, when they ruled him off for slugging."

"Slugging!" retorted the first speaker. "That is a good one! Why, that infant couldn't slug a flea. No; it is more to be believed that he was ruled off at his own request, to save his wretched little life. I only hope they will take him out of their team, for I should hate to meet him in a game. I might step on him without knowing it."

"Have a care, Suwarrow!" laughed the other. "Remember the story of David and Goliath—that is, if you ever heard it. There is always the chance that a little man may have something unexpected up his sleeve."

At this moment Takahaki, attracted by the sound of a name that he had learned to hate, rose to his feet, turned squarely about, and stared at the speakers. They were young men, evidently students, and one of them was a pleasant-faced chap who reminded him of Dun Brown, and whom he felt that he could like. The other was a blond giant, with a mane of tawny hair, whom he hated on sight as instinctively as a dog hates a wolf. A

single glance of bitter defiance flashed between them, and then the Japanese lad moved away.

"That is the very chap we were talking about. I hope he didn't overhear what we said," exclaimed the smaller man of the two, regretfully.

"I care not if he hears all and as much more, the makaki (dwarf)!" responded Suwarrow, savagely.

That night Captain Brownleigh planned the rearrangement of his forces made necessary by the loss of Snelling. He himself had played at right-guard, and had looked forward, not without considerable trepidation, it must be confessed, to facing the giant who played left-guard on the L. U. team. Now he must take Snelling's place as centre-rush and snap-back. Who should he put in as guard to face the big Russian? He had plenty of fairly heavy men to choose from, but no two of them put together seemed heavy enough when his mind pictured the giant of the opposite side. He made a diagram showing the relative positions of the players of both teams, and studied it with knitted brows. "Lloyd, of course, will continue at quarter, and you, Taki, will play at right-half, as you have done. Hall, Jones, and Abercrombie must stay where they are," he said, aloud, though not addressing any one in particular; "but who to put in for guard opposite that infernal Russian beats me."

"Dun Brown, if you would let me play on that guard," began Takahaki, hesitatingly.

"You, Taki!" cried Dunster, looking up to see if the other were in earnest. "Why, you are the

lightest man on the team, while I am looking for the heaviest. Of course, you don't mean it, though."

"Yes, Dun Brown, I mean all right. I am make this ball play for only catch that Rus-si-an, and would be where I may meet him most quick, and most times. If you make of me guard I will be very glad."

"Why, man, he would eat you alive at one mouthful!"

"Maybe, if he can open his mouth, but also maybe it will stay too tight shut."

"Honest, Taki, do you think you could do a thing to him?"

"Yes, Dun Brown, I think maybe so."

"By George! I've half a mind to let you try it. There isn't any one else who would have half a show against him, and it may break him all up just to see a little chap like you facing him. Perhaps he'll be afraid to tackle you hard, for fear you will explode or something."

So it was settled, in spite of amazed protests from Snelling, from members of the athletic committee, and from half the team. Captain Brownleigh listened patiently, but refused to be moved from the position he had taken; and thus Takahaki gained his heart's desire.

During the next two days the team devoted every spare minute to practice in their new positions, and poor Taki was banged about unmercifully. Even the members of his own eleven felt aggrieved that he should occupy a place for which he seemed so

eminently unfitted, and gladly would have seen him forced to resign it. But the Japanese lad took his punishment with smiling good-nature, and seemed none the worse for it in the end.

"All I can say of him is that he's a tin wonder on steel springs," remarked "Eel" Lloyd, during a heated discussion of the situation; "and though I don't believe he can do a thing to the Russian, it will puzzle the latter to know what to do with him."

Although the crowd of spectators assembled to witness the second, and last, Navy game of the season was not nearly so great as that at Philadelphia, it was a notable gathering, and filled Annapolis to overflowing. Special trains were run from Baltimore and Washington, and one of them brought the gruff old Congressman whom we know as Dunster Brownleigh's godfather.

The L—— University team was the first to trot out from under the grandstand and make its appearance on the field. It was accorded a hearty welcome by the assembled thousands of spectators, many of whom exchanged comments on the extraordinary size of one of its players. A minute later a thunderous round of cheers greeted the advent of the Navy team, which, losing the choice of goal, promptly lined up for the kick-off, with their eager opponents facing them.

As the two teams thus assumed position, a sudden roar of laughter broke from the spectators, and with it were mingled cries of:

"David and Goliath!"

"Give the little one his sling."

"Jack and the giant!"

"Hold him up so we can see him."

"Baby mine!"

"Where's his nurse?"

These expressions, and hundreds of others like them, were called forth by the amazing disparity in size of two opposing guards, and they irritated the Navy team until there was hardly a member of it but what wished Midshipman Matsu back in Japan at that moment.

"Never mind, Taki, don't let them jar you," said Dunster Brownleigh.

"I have no ears," replied Takahaki, looking up with a quick smile. "I have only eyes for see that Rus-si-an."

Across ten yards of open space the Lu-Lu's big guard glared incredulous at his direct opponent. Heretofore he always had been faced by men as nearly of his own size as could be found, and the bigger they were the more pleased he had been, since he thus was given a chance to show off his own prodigious strength to advantage. Now to be faced by a pygmy, a dwarf, a "makaki," as he termed the Japanese, was bewildering. It was even worse than that. It was maddening, for he knew not how to act. How could he use his strength against a thing like that? Perhaps it was only a joke, though, and in another minute the little chap might be replaced by some one more nearly his own size. He glanced into the faces of his comrades to

see what they thought of the situation. They were laughing at his predicament. Again he glared at the opposing line. Yes, there was the little man, crouched, ready to spring forward, and with eyes narrowed to merest slits, that seemed to pierce him like knives. Then the big man became filled with a terrible rage.

"It is an insult!" he hissed to himself, "but dearly shall they pay for it. And he, the makaki, I will break him into little pieces."

As these thoughts flashed through Suwarrow's mind the referee's whistle blew. Dun Brown snapped the ball back to quarter, who instantly passed it to a waiting half. The two lines of crouching forwards sprang at each other like unleashed tigers, and the game was on.

CHAPTER IX

"HOW DO YOU DO, SIX TO TWO?"

As the great game between Annapolis and L—— University was played under old rules, several kinds of interference were at that time permitted that since then have been forbidden. Consequently the game was a much more savage affair than would be possible at the present day. From the first crashing collision of the opposing forces, a human figure projected violently through the air as from a catapult sailed over the heads of the Navy men and dropped heavily to earth behind them. It was Midshipman Matsu who thus had been picked up and flung bodily by his big antagonist. One of the Navy backs punted at the same moment, and the ball, sailing at such a height as just to clear all heads, struck the human projectile so fairly that they came to the ground together.

Takahaki, holding the ball for a "down," instantly was buried and ground into the earth by the ton's weight of fiercely struggling humanity that fell on him with the force of an avalanche. Moreover, as he was judged to have been "off-side" when he caught the ball, his "down" was not allowed,

and his team was compelled to forfeit ten yards of precious territory.

"For Heaven's sake, send that man to the side lines, Brownleigh!" demanded Hall. "He's no more good in this game than a child, and if he isn't promptly killed or taken off the field he'll ruin us in no time."

"All right," answered the captain. "I'll consider your suggestion. Look out! Here they come!"

The L. U.'s played a fiercely aggressive game, and charge after charge, each led by the giant Russian, crashed with relentless force against the Navy line, which slowly but surely was forced backward. Five yards were lost, ten, fifteen, twenty, and the ball was getting perilously near the Navy goal. Desperately as the middies fought, they could not withstand the cruel weight hurled against them. The struggle was on the Navy ten-yard line, when suddenly "Eel" Lloyd emerged from a scrimmage, and, running like a hare, with Dunster Brownleigh beside him to ward off interference, succeeded in carrying the ball back into L. U.'s territory before he was caught and downed.

In the mean time these two had left behind them a terrific scrimmage that raged about a centre composed of Takahaki and the big Russian. Never for a moment had the former lost sight of his chosen opponent, nor let slip a chance to attack him. Never again, since the very first, had the big man been able to seize his annoying enemy. The latter

"A TERRIFIC SCRIMMAGE RAGED ABOUT TAKAHAKI AND THE BIG RUUSSIAN"

eluded his clutch like a drop of quicksilver, and seemed to rebound from him like a rubber ball. Repeatedly the Japanese lad was hurled breathless to the ground and crushed beneath a writhing, prodding, kicking pyramid. Always Suwarrow formed one of its component parts, and for a time he and Takahaki were invariably found grinding against each other at its very bottom. After a while, however, it was noticed that the Russian seemed a trifle less eager to plunge into the very heart of the scrimmage, but contented himself with throwing his great weight against its outer rim. Now, too, Takahaki no longer sought the fate of a grain of wheat between an upper and a nether millstone, but seemed to float buoyantly to the surface of the plunging mass of heads, legs, and arms, always appearing as close to Suwarrow as though he were a steel filing attracted by a magnet. His attacks upon his bulky antagonist were like those of a king-bird against a hawk, and for a long time they seemed equally productive of annoyance, but without visible effect.

Again was the Navy line forced slowly back, yard after yard, fiercely but impotently fighting for every inch until they found themselves in the very shadow of their own goal. Then, in desperation, Captain Brownleigh flung himself across the fatal line with the ball clasped tightly in his arms. He had made a "safety," and might carry the ball out, anywhere within his own twenty-five-yard line, for a free kick; but at the same time he had given

his opponents two points, the first thus far scored by either side. This was greeted by a joyous roar from the L. U. rooters, and by an ominous silence from those who sympathized with the Navy.

"Don't look to me like it was fair to pit a bantam 'gainst a big Shanghai rooster," remarked a certain gruff old Congressman occupying a seat in the grandstand to a stranger sitting at his left.

"But," replied the latter, smiling, "the bantam has the spurs of a game-cock, and if I am not very much mistaken he is using them to good effect. Does the Shanghai appear to you to be quite as aggressive as he did at first?"

"No, I can't say as he does; but what mortal man would, after a solid half-hour of rough-and-tumble fighting? for 'tain't nothing else that I can see. I tell you, my friend, there's something wrong about this business. They may call it football as much as they please, but it's nothing of the kind. I've seen the real thing, and I know. Football is a gentleman's game; but the riot these boys are engaged in is more like real fighting than anything I've gazed on since the Civil War."

"Where did you see football played?" inquired the stranger.

"Up in Victoria City, British Columbia, and a prettier game of any kind than that was I never want to watch."

"Probably played under Association rules," suggested the stranger.

"It certainly was played under rules of some

kind, which is more than you can say of the death struggle taking place before our very eyes at this minute."

"There you are mistaken, sir," replied the stranger, who was the naval officer recently returned from Japan. "This game is played under a number of most carefully considered rules that are strictly enforced. For instance, a blow from a clinched fist is not allowed, throttling is not allowed, tackling below the knees is not allowed, nor is tripping, off-side play, or, or— By Jove! but that was great!" he exclaimed, springing to his feet and joining in a wild outburst of cheering from the Navy side.

"What was it?" asked the Congressman during a partial subsidence of the joyful racket.

"Didn't you see the bantam throw the Shanghai over his head?"

"I saw the big man go down like he'd been shot, but I didn't see who done it. Isn't there any rule against killing a man that way?"

"Oh, he isn't killed," laughed the other. "He's only sick at the stomach, and wishing the whistle would blow before he has to get up and take more medicine. There it is now. Well, he's in luck this time."

The end of the first half found the score two to nothing in favor of L. U., and both sides thankful for a short respite from their tremendous exertions. It also found the middies clamorous for Takahaki's withdrawal from the game, in favor of their heaviest substitute.

Only "Eel" Lloyd, stripped to the skin and undergoing a brisk rubbing at the hands of a trainer, entered a protest. "Don't you listen to them, Brownleigh!" he cried. "I've been watching that chap from the very first, as anxiously as any one, and if he isn't doing great work then I'm awfully mistaken."

"But we've got to score in the next half," objected Abercrombie.

"Of course we have, and with the help of our friend from Japan we can do it, too."

"How is it Taki?" asked Captain Brownleigh, addressing his roommate, who was lying prone on the floor, stretched at full length and inhaling long, deep-drawn breaths. "Can you stand the strain another half? How are you feeling?"

"I feeling pretty fine, Dun Brown, and very glad for catch that Rus-si-an," was the smiling answer.

"Then you wouldn't like for me to put a heavier man in your place?"

"No, Dun Brown! No!" cried Takahaki, in distressed accents, at the same time springing to his feet with the elasticity of a rubber ball. "I am very happy with that Rus-si-an, and pretty quick he will be of the ballfoot tired, if I may play with him. No, Dun Brown, if you take me off I so shamed that maybe I hara-kiri do. If you please!"

"All right, old man, you shall stay in it till the bitter end; but remember, we've got to score or die a-trying."

"Hei (yes), Dun Brown, I think maybe we shall

score make," replied the lad from Japan, again smiling contentedly.

Apparently, however, he had small cause for content during the earlier portion of the second half, when he might have been the football itself, so terrible was the punishment he received, principally at the hands of the L. U.'s big guard. The latter devoted his entire energy to the annihilation of his small adversary. Once he flung him through the air for a nerve-racking fall, and several times he fell on him with pointed elbows digging viciously into Takahaki's anatomy. Finally the two were lost to sight in the most desperate scrimmage of the game. From it darted "Eel" Lloyd with the ball tucked under his arm and sprinting like the wind.

Fleet runners were at his heels, but he was fleeter than they. Out-stretched fingers clutched vainly at his canvas jacket, his neck felt scorched by the heat of panting breaths. A mighty roar from grandstand and bleacher filled the air, but he heard it not. In his ears, to the exclusion of all other sounds, rang the words heard in the dressing-room—"We've got to score or die a-trying." A figure loomed ominously before him. He dodged it and fell plump into the arms of another. The next instant he was buried deep beneath a falling mountain, and something snapped. He was vaguely conscious that a sharper pain was added to his already innumerable aches and smarts, but he did not care; all lesser evils were lost to sight in the overwhelming bitterness of his disappointment. Five yards more, and

he would have scored a touch-down. Now his great run would go for naught. There would be another line-up, and again the L. U.'s, headed by that terrible Russian, would buck, buck, buck, with resistless weight, forcing the middies back yard by yard, as they had done over and over, until all that he had gained was again lost.

As the mountain above him was lifted, he slowly regained his feet and tried to brace himself for the coming struggle. He was in great pain, and wondered if there was any go in him. All at once he became conscious that the roar of cheering was continuing without abatement, and he wondered what it was for. He glanced back up the field, and in an instant all his pain, all his discouragement were forgotten. The big man of the L. U.'s, their invincible battering-ram and chief bulwark, was being led from the field so completely done up that his head swayed weakly to and fro, and already a substitute, seemingly not more than half his size, was running to take his place opposite the ever-smiling Takahaki.

These two, the Japanese and the Russian, had been found at the very bottom of the scrimmage, locked in an embrace so fierce that it took the strength of half a dozen men to separate them. Takahaki was underneath, and it was feared that he was killed; but the moment the Russian was pulled from him he scrambled to his feet and ran to join his comrades, who were streaming far down the field in the wake of Lloyd's magnificent run.

But Suwarrow had to be helped to his feet, and then was led slowly from the field, incapable of further effort.

So, thanks to the little man from Japan, there no longer was a giant to batter the Navy line. At last they were faced only by men of ordinary stature, a knowledge so cheering and so strengthening that at the crisp signal of Quarter-back Lloyd they sprang upon their weakened antagonists and swept them from the earth—at least they rushed them across their own goal-line like autumn leaves before a gale, and scored the first touch-down of the day. Then, for one breathless minute, the tremendous riot of cheering was hushed as Dunster Brownleigh took position for a place kick for goal. Lloyd, lying at full length, held the ball just clear of the ground. For an instant the young captain sighted keenly the imaginary line from ball to goal; then he sprang forward and kicked, apparently without effort. Released from Lloyd's hands at the moment of impact, the brown ball, lifting from the ground like a swallow in swift flight, skimmed cleverly over the bar, midway between the sentinel posts, and the goal was won.

"How do you do,
Six to two?
That is the score
We give Lu-Lu!"

chanted the Navy rooters, beside themselves with joy. Nor were they later obliged to alter a single

note of their jubilant song, for only five minutes of the half remained, and during that interval the exulting middies easily held their own even against the most strenuous efforts of their desperate antagonists.

So six to two, in favor of Annapolis, remained the score of the fiercest game ever played on the academy grounds; and that evening, while talking it all over, every member of the team acknowledged that but for Takahaki, of Hakodate, it certainly would have been two to nothing, and perhaps much more, against them.

"It simply was the first battle of a Russo-Japanese war, fought here on American soil," vehemently remarked the gruff old Congressman as he prepared to leave the grandstand; "and I am going to see if something can't be done to put an end to such violations of international comity."

CHAPTER X

A FRIENDSHIP WITH THE RUS-SI-AN

So the football season ended in a blaze of glory at the Naval Academy, and Captain Brownleigh was showered with congratulations upon the success of his administration. The heroes of the great game, Midshipmen Lloyd and Matsu, were laid up for repairs, the former with a fractured collar-bone and the latter with two broken ribs; but little they cared for such trifles, since they were so covered with glory as to be envied by every other member of the team. In her Western home, Mrs. Brownleigh was agitated by conflicting emotions. She trembled when she considered the danger to which her boy had been exposed, through her ignorance that games might still be played even after an entire schedule had been cancelled, and at the same time she so glowed with pride at his prowess that she carefully treasured every newspaper account of the great game. It was a comfort, however, to remember that for a year at least there would be no more football.

As for the gruff old Congressman, whose indignation at what he considered the brutality of the game he had witnessed caused him to make another ef-

fort to have football suppressed at the academy, he only was laughed at, and told that the administration could not afford to vacillate.

After the game, during the very first conversation between Dunster and Takahaki, the former said:

"How you did make that Suwarrow chap hate you, old man! Do you know, in the dressing-room, after it was all over, I heard him sputtering to himself, in his own tongue, that some day he hoped to have the pleasure of helping to wipe every Japanese off the face of the earth. I shut him up quick by answering in Polish, which he evidently understood, that possibly the wiping-out might be done by the other side. You ought to have seen him glare at me! Weren't you afraid he would kill you in some one of those scrimmages?"

"No, Dun Brown," replied Takahaki, scornfully. "I not any 'fraid of that Rossky; but he of me was very 'fraid, and but for those ru-als (rules) I would have make him so that he could not finish even one half. Many thing I could do to him but for those ru-als, and they make me 'shamed for be so long to at length put him from the game. It is those ru-als that I do not like so much that never any more will I the ballfoot play. Much better I like botori, with no ru-als."

"Never play again!" cried the captain of the team, in dismay. "Oh, come, Taki! You surely don't mean that. Why, we are already counting on you with your jiu-jitsu tricks for next season's work."

"Yes, Dun Brown, I mean. Without jiu-jitsu

am I not any good in ballfoot play; and with ballfoot ru-als jiu-jitsu not any good. So next when I fight with a Rossky it must be that no ru-als come in between us."

So decided was Takahaki's stand against a game whose rules forbade him to attack even a Russian according to his own benighted ideas of what was right and proper, that, though he continued to be active in all other athletics, the memorable struggle with L. U. was his first and last match game of football. It had, however, done him the good service to firmly establish his social position at the academy, where his dash and fearlessness, combined with gentle manners, unfailing cheerfulness, and exquisite courtesy, rendered him a prime favorite. Between him and Dunster Brownleigh there sprang up a love like that of David and Jonathan, and the influence of the lad from Japan over the happy-go-lucky young American was most salutary. Of course, Dunster could not allow a "Jap" to outrank him as a student, though to hold his own he was forced to work as never before in his life. Nor could he get into much mischief, because Takahaki, having implicit confidence in him, insisted on following his lead in everything, thus making him directly responsible for whatever troubles they might encounter.

The Japanese government, having instructed Midshipman Matsu to gain, while in America, all possible knowledge concerning the construction and management of submarine boats, he spent his

second year's furlough in the yard and shops of a torpedo-boat construction company that made a specialty of submarines, and Dunster Brownleigh accompanied him.

"Not but what I'd a heap rather go up in the Adirondacks, where my people are spending the summer, and have you go along with me," remarked the latter. "But, as I can't persuade you to do that, any more than I could persuade the moon to come down out of the sky, and as I want to know just as much about submarines as you do, there's nothing for it that I can see but just to tag after you and spend the only vacation I've had in two years at a measly old ship-yard, among a lot of greasy shops."

So Dunster followed Takahaki, and his parents, leaving the Adirondacks for his sake, took rooms in a great sea-side hotel not far from the ship-yard, where they did everything in their power to give the two young fellows a good time out of working hours. Because the Brownleighs were there, the gruff old Congressman, now become a Senator, also put in an appearance at the sea-side hotel; and about the same time the Japanese minister, desirous of seeing for himself how the protégé of his Mikado was getting along, ran down for a week; and all these people became drawn together by a sympathetic bond, the name of which was Takahaki.

Mr. Brownleigh spoke of him as one of the most remarkable young men he ever had met, while Mrs. Brownleigh already loved him on account of his

friendship with her boy. The Senator, who had seen him on the football field, admired his fighting qualities, and the minister naturally was proud of the lad who not only had achieved distinction in his own country, but had in so short a time gained an enviable reputation among strangers.

There were a number of pretty girls at the hotel, every one of whom declared herself to be intensely interested in torpedo-boats and most anxious for further knowledge of the subject. As the Senator, still connected with naval appropriations and desirous of learning something of their expenditure, had a government launch at his disposal in which to visit the ship-yard whenever he felt inclined, all these young ladies made love to him, with the result that launch-parties to the ship-yard became the most popular form of that season's entertainment. So the Senator's launch always was well filled with a bevy of girls, sometimes chaperoned by Mrs. Brownleigh, sometimes gathered in a flattering group about the grave-faced Japanese minister, but never for a moment neglecting the Senator himself; and when they reached the ship-yard, Dunster and Takahaki, appearing very manly in their working suits of oil-stained canvas, were in instant demand as guides and explainers of the bewildering sights and sounds encountered by the fair visitors on every side.

With these alleviations, Dunster Brownleigh's "working" vacation became such a pleasant affair that he deeply regretted its termination with the

arrival of the day when he was compelled to return to the exacting routine of the academy. His regret was strengthened by the fact that his roommate was to be left behind. This was brought about by the Japanese minister, who seemed to think that Takahaki was acquiring at the ship-yard an experience too valuable to be interrupted for the present.

Thus Dunster, going aboard the steamer that was to carry him to Annapolis, was separated for the first time in two years from the chum who so decidedly had influenced his own life during that time. As his boat was beginning to move from her moorings, and he was exchanging last farewells with Takahaki, who remained on the wharf, the latter suddenly pointed to an approaching launch. It was that of the Senator, filled with a greater number than usual of pretty girls, come thus early on purpose to bid the departing middy good-bye. Of course, the latter's whole attention instantly was diverted in that direction; and as the outgoing steamboat passed the incoming launch, he, leaning far over a guard-rail, exchanged merry salutations with its fair occupants. All at once he became filled with amazement, for, sitting beside his godfather was a well-dressed stranger whom, at the moment of passing, he recognized as the young Russian, Suwarrow Suwarrowvitch.

Of course, there was then no opportunity to gain the slightest information concerning this unexpected and decidedly undesirable presence, and as he was

swiftly borne away he could only speculate, uncomfortably, as to its meaning. On reaching Annapolis, he promptly wrote to the Senator and to Takahaki for information, and from the former he received the following brief reply:

"DEAR BOY,—In answer to yours regarding Mr. Suwarrowvitch, would say that I don't know what call you have to be so worked up. He seems to be a gentleman, even though he is a Russian, and he is most popular with the girls. He came to me with a note of introduction from the Russian ambassador, which, of course, I was bound to honor, America and Russia being the good friends they are. No, your mother did not meet him, she having left before he arrived. Try to have a little more charity for those so unfortunate as to be born in other countries, and believe me to be, as always,

"Your affectionate godfather."

Takahaki wrote: "Yes, the big man about who you ask some question is here at work, and I make with him much friendship. More of him I will tell you when we may sometime meet again."

Of course, this was very puzzling, and Dunster was not at all pleased that his friend should be on friendly terms with a man whom he considered to be an enemy to both of them. No enlightenment of the mystery came to him until some months later, when, on the night before Christmas, as he was dressing for a ball to be given by the cadets in the old gymnasium that evening, the door of his sitting-room was quietly opened and in walked his long-absent roommate.

"Hurrah, old man!" cried Dunster, springing for-

ward and grasping his chum's hand. "Why didn't you let me know you were coming? I suppose you have run up for the ball, and you are here just in time, too. So hurry up and jump into your dress togs."

"The ball?" repeated Takahaki, looking puzzled. "Is it a game?"

"Game? No, of course not," laughed Dunster. "It is the Christmas Eve hop in the gym, you know, to which you are one of the heaviest subscribers. Don't you remember, I wrote you all about it, and you sent back twenty-five dollars? Awfully sorry that I can't stop for more 'chin-chin,' but I must run up to the hotel to escort a young lady from Baltimore who— But, I say, what's the matter with your coming along? There's more than one of them—I don't exactly know how many—in the party, and they'll be pleased as pie to have another man in buttons."

Always ready to follow Dun Brown's lead, Takahaki promptly accepted this invitation, hurried into his dress uniform, drove with his chum to the Maryland, where he was introduced to half a dozen of the jolliest and prettiest of Baltimore girls, and from that moment until the conclusion of the ball he was the life of the party. Never had he shown such sprightly wit, never before had he appeared so contagiously happy, so bubbling over with irrepressible joy. Always a good dancer, on this occasion he danced to perfection, and long before the hop was ended Takahaki, of Hakodate,

was unanimously voted by the fairer half of the assemblage to be the very dearest little cadet they ever had met.

He received a score of invitations to forthcoming balls and parties, to be given in nearly as many different cities during the next two weeks, and he gravely promised to accept every one of them, always provided that he could obtain permission from the authorities. He was loaded with cotillion favors, and when, finally, to the softly lingering strains of "Home, Sweet Home," the brilliant affair came to an end, the lad from Japan knew that he had gained a beautiful memory, to be treasured so long as he lived.

An hour later, Dunster Brownleigh, returning from a little supper engagement, was amazed to find his roommate hard at work packing a trunk.

"What on earth are you doing, Taki?" he cried.

"I am make ready for a travel," was the smiling reply.

"Travel! Where to? You surely aren't going back to the ship-yard?"

"No; it was there I get my order to come here and arrange to start with all hurry for San Francisco."

"San Francisco! And what are you going to do there?"

"Take the steamer of Saturday for Yokohama."

"For Japan! Then you have been recalled?"

"Yes, Dun Brown."

"Do you know why?"

"No, I do not know. But, Dun Brown, I think, maybe"—here the young fellow stood up, with a gleam of intense excitement in his eyes—"I think, almost sure, that pretty quick my country and the country of that Suwarrow are at war."

"You don't mean it!" gasped Midshipman Brownleigh. "A war with Russia! and you will be in it, while I shall be left behind! Oh, Taki, can't you take me with you? I would give half my life to be in that fight."

"For have you fight with me, I, too, would give half of the years to come," replied the other. "But such a thing may not be. For this time, only Nippon Denji (man of Japan) may fight the White Czar man. Also, it is perhaps a war most dreadful; for it will be the fight for life of one little man against three very big man—forty poor millions against one hundred and twenty millions very rich."

"Taki, what did you mean when you wrote that you had made a friendship with Suwarrow?"

"That Rossky come to learn the submarine. I not like that any one else teach him. So I make much friendship, and show him everything. Oh, yes, I teach that Rus-si-an many thing most val-*you*-able for—Japan."

CHAPTER XI

MIDSHIPMAN BROWNLEIGH RESIGNS

Takahaki departed from Annapolis by first train in the early morning of Christmas Day, and his going left Dunster Brownleigh so melancholy that even the festivities of the season failed to restore his usual cheerfulness. Now, for the first time, he took an active interest in Far Eastern affairs, and began to search newspapers in the reading-room for every scrap of information concerning the situation between Japan and Russia. He studied tables and statistics until he knew the relative military strength of the two countries on sea and land. He read up on Port Arthur, Dalny, Vladivostok, the Siberian Railway, and Korea. He studied the history of Japan's war with China in 1894–95, and finally he achieved a reputation as the best-posted inmate of the academy on the Eastern situation. Then he ventured to write a short article on Japanese naval officers, with especial reference to those who had been educated at Annapolis. This he sent to a leading service journal, by which, to his unbounded pride, it was accepted, and he received a note from the editor asking for further contributions of a similar character.

On the very day that his article was published came the startling news that diplomatic relations between Japan and Russia had been severed; and this, as the professor of international law explained to his classes, meant war between the two nations without a formal declaration by either side.

"The cheek of little, heathen Japan daring to defy big, civilized Russia!" cried Ethelbert Quackenbush to a group of his classmates who were eagerly discussing the situation.

"You mean little, modern, highly civilized, fully prepared Japan daring to fight in self-defence against big, mediæval, brutal, unprepared Russia," said Dunster Brownleigh, quietly, but with flashing eyes.

"Oh, do I?" asked Quackenbush, sarcastically. "And, pray, what do you know of my meanings?"

"Not much, Quack, I must confess," laughed Dunster, "but I sometimes try to puzzle them out just for fun, and often with results that are most surprising."

"Do you mean to say—" began the other, threateningly.

"No, Quack, I don't," interrupted Dunster. "I don't mean to say anything that will ruffle your little feelings. I only happened to recall a certain Midshipman Matsu, recently a member of this class, and various fights in which he was forced to take rather prominent part. If the Japanese navy is officered by such as he, why—"

"I say, you fellows," broke in "Pink" Lawson,

who had been reading, "quit your foolishness and listen to this description of the very man you are discussing."

With this Lawson read aloud an extract from Dunster's article in the service journal. "That is by some one who knows Taki," commented the reader, as he concluded, "and I'd like to know who he is. The whole article is a corking good one, and evidently the chap who wrote it is well up on his subject. Have you seen it, Dun?"

Midshipman Brownleigh's face was flushed with gratified pride, but he only answered, "Yes, I glanced over it and thought it fairly good."

"Fairly good!" shouted Lawson. "Oh, ye gods! Listen to the conceit of the man! Why, Dun Brown, if you could write half as well you would be contesting honors with Captain Mahan himself. Go to, Dun Brown! Go to, and study modesty of demeanor!"

Dunster followed this advice in so far that he went to his own room, and, after reading over for the fiftieth time the first bit of his own writing to be glorified by print, he sat down to compose another article, and thereby used up much time that should have been devoted to study.

On the following day came the great news of Admiral Togo's dashing attack with torpedo-boats, on the Russian fleet lying carelessly outside Port Arthur harbor, and the partial destruction of four of the great war-ships that had threatened to exterminate the Japanese navy. A few hours earlier

two other Russian war-ships had been destroyed by the Japanese in the Korean harbor of Chemulpo.

Some six weeks later Dunster received his second letter from Takahaki, the first having been written from San Francisco, on the eve of the latter's sailing for Japan.

"Dun Brown, my friend of extreme dearness," he wrote. "Congratulate me a thousand times for great honors heaped upon unworthy head! I am—hold fast your heart and prepare to be joyously amazed—I am a commander of a war-ship of his August Majesty Matsuhito, Mikado of Japan. I, then, am captain—*captain*, if you please—of torpedo-boat number 999. A very small boat, it is true, perhaps the smallest in the imperial navy; but, oh, so deadly in action, so swift, so wonderfully able! And I am her captain! Perhaps it is but for to-day; and so I hasten to allow you to congratulate me while I may claim the title.

"Have you learned of our most honorable admiral's terrible blow against the fleet of the White Czar? Yes, certainly you must have heard how, flying with the swiftness of eagles, he took them by surprise while, confiding in great strength, they lay outside the forts, ready for destroying the transports of Japan. Only torpedo-boats were sent in, and I was given the honorable privilege to accompany the brave 999. We, the smallest, torpedoed successfully the *Czarevitch*, of the largest. The shot fell upon us so thick that almost we must breathe it, and, alas! our captain, the most gallant, could not longer stay with us, but was called to join the immortals of Dai Nippon. Thus to me, next in rank, fell the great honor of commanding. Again I may not talk with you; for this night some of us are to enter the harbor, to which the ships of the enemy have fled. So, my friend, am I filled with happiness that at last I may fight what you call the Rus-si-an without those ru-als.

Always with joyous memories,

"Takahaki Matsu,

"Captain (for this day) I. J. N."

If it had been hard for Dunster to study and attend to every-day duties before the advent of this letter, it was doubly so now. He could think of nothing but the great lesson that was being taught the bully of the world in the school of the Far East; and one of the teachers was that quiet little Japanese who so recently had looked to him for guidance in everything. Now he was transformed, as though by magic, into the captain of a war-ship that was taking an active part in the history-making battles of the world, while a certain Dunster Brownleigh tamely ate and slept and pursued the same humdrum routine that— Oh, well, what was the use in thinking of it? His own life, as compared with that now being led by Takahaki, was not worth considering.

Dunster vividly remembered the account of the daring dash of two Japanese torpedo-boats into Port Arthur harbor on a night of storm and blackness, their successful attack against the mighty battle-ship *Retvizan*, and of their flight through a blinding glare of search-lights and a tornado of hurtling missiles that sank one and drove the other helpless onto the beach, but he could not recall that the names or numbers of the heroic craft had been given. Could one of them have been the boat commanded by his chum? How he wished he knew! And the very next day he read an extract from a belated war-letter to a London paper giving an account of that very incident. In it the two daring boats were mentioned by number, and one of them

was 999, but which of the two finally was sunk and which beached, the writer either did not know or forgot to mention.

Shortly after this, Dunster received another letter even more disquieting than that from Takahaki. It was from the manager of the ship-yard in which he and his chum had worked, asking if, by any chance, he could obtain leave of absence, and at the same time be tempted by an offer to go on a special mission to the seat of war. In conclusion the writer begged him under all circumstances to keep profoundly secret the fact that such a proposition had been suggested.

On fire with an excitement that he must carefully suppress, Dunster made cautious inquiries that resulted in the knowledge that on no account could such a leave of absence from the academy be granted. Moreover, he learned that the neutrality laws of the United States forbade any officer, soldier, sailor, or other employé of the government, save only duly accredited naval and military attachés, from visiting the seat of war during its continuance.

Could a midshipman resign from the academy?

Certainly not, so long as he was in good standing, except under extraordinary circumstances, since he was bound to serve for at least eight years.

There was, then, but one way by which a cadet could evade the obligation that he voluntarily had assumed; and, in his overwhelming desire to visit the seat of war, Dunster Brownleigh, ever reckless of consequences, determined to adopt it.

Already he had become careless in his studies, and now he grew more so. Also, he no longer sought to avoid the accumulation of demerits. His case became one for grave consultation among the officials of the academy, and he received warnings of the possible fate in store for him unless he made a decided effort to regain his lost standing as one of the most promising men of his class. Even certain of his classmates remonstrated with him and begged him to "brace up," but without avail. The lad became a mystery that none could solve. He was in the best of health and spirits, he attended regularly and promptly to all his duties, but day by day he sank lower in rank, until at length he stood at the very foot of his class. Then came the annual examination, and, failing to pass it, he was summoned before the superintendent.

"I cannot understand it, Brownleigh," said that official, sternly, but with a note of sorrow in his voice. "You, who were one of our best men, have with no apparent reason retrograded so rapidly and to such an extent that your presence in this academy is no longer desirable, and your dismissal is in order."

Beneath the searching gaze that accompanied these words the lad's eyes fell, and for a moment he almost regretted the course he had pursued.

"However," continued the superintendent, "for the sake of your parents and friends, and in consideration of your previous record, it has been decided not to disgrace you by dismissal, but, instead,

to offer you the choice of two alternatives. You may drop back into the third class, with the opportunity of regaining the one to which you belong by extra work, or your resignation will be accepted."

"Thank you, sir," replied the young cadet, striving to speak firmly, but with a suspicious tremor in his voice. "Rather than be dropped, I think I will take advantage of your kind permission and resign."

Thus it happened that Midshipman Brownleigh, to the amazement and regret of all his friends, left the service that he had been so anxious to enter, and in which for three years he had been so prominent a figure.

CHAPTER XII

OFF TO THE WAR

It is doubtful if even Dun Brown, reckless, careless, happy-go-lucky chap that he was, would have taken so desperate a step in order to realize his great desire had it not been for the Casimir blood that coursed madly through his veins at the mere mention of the word Russian. For centuries that same blood, the blood of a generous, high-bred nobility, had revolted against the oppression of its brutal conquerors. Now that Russia again was seeking to smother the national life of a weaker neighbor, the Polish side of Dunster Brownleigh's nature so urged him to take part in the struggle for freedom and modern civilization that he had no strength to resist the call. Born of a fighting stock, he could conceive no greater happiness than to be permitted to battle for his native America; but she, having no present need for his services in that direction, his second preference was to fight the destroyers of his mother's family and the active enemies of his dearest friend. To the accomplishment of this desire but one way had opened, and this he had followed until it led him outside the service that once had been the goal of his ambition.

Now, with one career closed by his own deliberate act, he proposed to open another by his own unaided effort.

With this end in view, Dunster had written to the manager of the ship-yard and to the editor of the service journal, with both of whom he reached a definite understanding. Thus, the moment his resignation was accepted, he knew exactly what he proposed to do. First, he wrote to his parents, telling them that, as he had failed to pass an examination, he had been offered the alternatives of being dropped or resigning, and had chosen the latter.

"I have received an offer," he wrote, "to go to the war as a correspondent. That I am not wholly unfitted for the position you may judge from the enclosed articles, which are from my pen. I am going to study the situation here for two weeks, at the end of which time I shall come, lay it before you, and ask your permission to go to the Far East. I believe you will grant it, when you consider how unfitted I am for anything else, and how mortifying it would be for all of us just now if I were compelled to remain at home and face acquaintances who would pity me for having 'bilged' an examination. Besides, I often have heard you say, father, that travel was the most liberal of educations."

With this letter despatched, and with farewells bidden to his classmates, Dunster Brownleigh disappeared for two weeks, during which time but one person of all the world knew where he was and what he was doing. The person thus advised

was the ship-yard manager with whom our lad had corresponded.

At the end of the stipulated period, having announced his coming by telegraph, the young man appeared at his home, where he found both his parents anxiously awaiting him.

"Oh, Dunster! How could you? What have you done?" cried Mrs. Brownleigh as she flung her arms about her son's neck; but his father only shook hands and said, "Let us have dinner first, for I know the boy must be hungry, and talk afterwards."

An hour later the three were gathered in the cosey, softly lighted library, and Dunster was telling of his plans. When he had finished, Mr. Brownleigh said:

"Of course, son, both your mother and myself were terribly disappointed, as well as mortified, by your failure to pass that examination, and what practically amounts to your dismissal from the academy. Nor can we understand it; for you always have seemed bright enough, never before have failed to pass an examination, and almost to the end you held a creditable position in your class. I fear there is something back of the present situation that you have not fully explained, and that you are allowing a love of excitement, together with a desire for adventure, to turn you from the pathway of steady effort that alone leads to success."

"You are right, father; I have allowed my mind to become so filled with thoughts of the war that

there is no room in it for anything else. But I do believe, if you permit me to accept this new position, you will open to me a career fully as fine as the one I have just abandoned."

"Perhaps so, son, perhaps so, for I never did regard the navy, in time of peace, as offering the most brilliant of careers. What I wanted you to gain from it was the splendid education afforded by the academy course and the numberless opportunities to which it would open the way."

"This may be one of them," said Dunster. "Did you read my articles, father?"

"Yes, and was agreeably surprised at the breadth of information and the insight into affairs shown by them. Also I was at a loss to understand how the writer of those articles could fail to pass an examination that was a part of his regular course of preparation."

"But I did fail to pass it, father, and now—"

"Yes, son, and thus you have so decidedly taken your own affairs into your own hands that, after a most careful consideration of the situation, I have concluded to let you work them out without interference. So, if you can gain your mother's consent to your mad proposition, you may consider that mine also is given. Only, my dear boy, never for an instant imagine that by taking this position I am in any way casting you off or losing one spark of my interest in you. Always remember that, so long as I live, I am your father, loving you as no other human being, save only your mother, can

love you; standing by you in every emergency, and ready to aid you in times of distress or difficulty to the limit of my means and ability. Now I am going out for a while, and shall leave you to argue your case to its ultimate conclusion with your mother."

Dunster found less difficulty than he had anticipated in persuading his mother to take his view of the situation, though, of course, the prospect did not appear to her so brilliantly clear and fascinating as it did to him. Gazing at it through the medium of tears decidedly dimmed its brilliancy and blurred many of its features. Still, she could not deny her only child what so evidently was his heart's desire, and, after all, it would not be unpleasant to be able to speak of "My son, the war correspondent, now in the Far East." Mrs. Brownleigh was a little more proud of those two articles in the service journal than of anything that ever happened.

So, by the time her husband returned, all was settled, but it was a shock when Dunster announced that he should start for the "Coast" by the train of the following evening.

"Don't war correspondents require to have certain papers from the State Department that it will take you a week or more to procure?" asked Mr. Brownleigh.

"Yes, sir," replied Dunster, "but I already have them."

For a moment the elder man gazed quizzically at the younger, then he said: "And with all your preparations for the journey made, you had the cheek

to come and ask if we were willing that you should undertake it?"

"Which shows what implicit confidence I placed in you, dad."

In their desire to provide for all possible contingencies, Dunster's parents would have filled several trunks with a princely outfit, but, as he had been advised to reduce his luggage to the smallest possible dimensions, he declined to carry anything except a large hand-bag and a roll of rugs. From his father he accepted a fine hammerless revolver and a letter of credit for an amount sufficient to carry him in luxury entirely around the world; while his mother, who still retained certain superstitions of her race, insisted that he bear with him her most treasured possession, the last message ever received from her father, the Count Casimir, and written with his own blood. This precious bit of paper was enclosed in a silver box, fastened with a hidden spring, and so thin as to resemble a single thickness of metal. One side was exquisitely engraved and enamelled with a representation of St. Stanislaus of Poland, while the reverse bore the arms of the Casimirs. This priceless heirloom was protected by a silken envelope, and again by one of chamois, and as the heavy-hearted mother hung it about her son's neck she bade him care for it as for his life.

Then came the parting, so sorrowfully bitter that Dunster finally was obliged to release himself by gentle force from his mother's clinging embrace,

run from the house, and leap into a waiting carriage with voice too choked for a single word of farewell.

A few days later found our young correspondent standing, with a small camera in his hands, on the busy water-front of Seattle, watching with absorbed interest the transfer of several car-loads of extremely heavy freight, evidently machinery of some kind, to the hold of a waiting steamer, the very one on which he was to sail for far-away Japan. Bulky and heavy as was this freight, it was so carefully enveloped in wood and burlaps that no portion of it was visible.

"Very heavy," remarked a voice at Dunster's elbow as the stout derrick on the ship's deck creaked and groaned beneath the weight of an unusually bulky crate.

"Yes," replied Dunster, shortly, without turning or withdrawing his anxious gaze from the straining tackle.

"I wonder what it is?" persisted the voice.

Dunster was too abstracted to reply.

"It may be war material for Japan."

"Yes?" returned our lad, interrogatively, at the same moment taking a snap-shot at the bulky bit of freight which, having reached a sufficient altitude, was slowly swinging inboard. As he wound another film into position, he turned for a glance at the intruder, for whom he instantly conceived a dislike.

The man was small, dark, evidently a foreigner, but as evidently not a gentleman, rather loudly

dressed, and displayed much jewelry. He smiled as Dunster turned, and said:

"I hope, though, it is not war material, for I propose to sail by that steamer for Japan."

"What difference would it make?" asked the other.

"None at all, of course, unless we should happen to be overhauled by a Russian cruiser, and then it might make all the difference in the world."

"But all Russian cruisers in Eastern waters are safely bottled up either at Port Arthur or Vladivostok."

"Perhaps; but always there is a chance that one may slip out some dark night."

"Oh, well, I sha'n't worry until I see one," said Dunster, carelessly.

"Then you, too, sail by this ship?"

"I didn't say so," replied the lad, curtly, as he turned to walk away.

To Dunster's great disgust, the person who thus had accosted him proved to be the only other passenger on the great freighter *Cochise*. Consequently the young correspondent was obliged to see a great deal of him during the next two weeks. The man, whose name was Delar, claimed to be French, and the agent of a syndicate interested in Japanese war loans. While continually talking about himself, he managed to so pester Dunster with questions concerning his own object in crossing the Pacific, his past life, his views of the present war, and a thousand other personalities, that to avoid him the

latter spent hours and even whole days in his own state-room, when he would rather be on deck. Finally the longed-for announcement was made that the following morning would disclose the Japanese coast, and Dunster hailed it as a promise of escape from the annoying Frenchman even more than the ending of a tedious voyage. And it had been tedious, for across the entire expanse of the Pacific, known to travellers as the "great, lonely ocean," not a sail had been sighted, not the faintest trail of smoke, nothing to break the weary monotony of days. Now, with land only a few hours away, there surely ought to be something within range of vision, and in the hope of discovering a ship, Dunster mounted the bridge, the freedom of which had been given the two passengers. The captain was there, and Dunster had hardly greeted him when a look-out stationed aloft bawled down:

"Smoke ahoy!"

"Where away?" demanded the captain.

"Nearly dead ahead, sir, a little on the starboard bow."

A moment later the lookout announced, "Two smokes!" and directly afterwards, "Three smokes, close together!"

"Perhaps, who knows, it may be a fleet of Russian cruisers," remarked a hated voice at Dunster's elbow. "How would you like that? Eh, mon Brave!"

"It would at least give you something else to talk about besides me and my affairs," answered Dun-

ster, savagely, as he walked to the other end of the bridge.

Within an hour the trails of smoke had developed into dense, black clouds, belching ominously from the massive funnels of three monster ships whose nature still was doubtful. Then, suddenly, it was disclosed by the startling challenge of a shot fired in the direction of the *Cochise.*

CHAPTER XIII

PRISONERS ON PAROLE

With the roar of that first gun, which apparently fired a blank cartridge, a blue-cross ensign broke out from a masthead of the nearest ship.

"Russian, by Jove!" exclaimed the captain of the *Cochise*. "Show our colors, quartermaster."

This order was obeyed, and the stars and stripes streamed out defiantly from the after jackstaff, but the speed of the great ship was not slackened until a peremptory order in shape of a solid shot hurled across her bows bade her come to a halt. By the time her momentum was lost and she lay sullenly rolling on the long swells, she was abreast and within a cable's-length of the nearest man-of-war. From this ship two boats filled with armed men were lowered, and a few minutes later the *Cochise* was boarded by a Russian naval officer accompanied by a guard of marines in charge of a lieutenant.

While the latter scattered his men, placing one in the pilot-house, another at the forecastle companion-way, two more in the engine-room, and the rest at various important points, the officer in charge of the boarding-party, speaking English fairly well,

exchanged a few words with the captain, and then the two disappeared together in the direction of the main saloon. To this place also the purser, with the ship's papers, was summoned a minute later.

The two passengers were left alone, and Dunster, forgetting his dislike for his companion in the present excitement, asked him if he thought there was any danger of the ship being seized.

"Who knows?" replied the Frenchman, shrugging his shoulders, and at the same time nonchalantly lighting a cigarette; "a Russian, with the power to enforce his will, does as he pleases, the same as every one else."

"But America is not at war with Russia, and this is a peaceful American merchant-ship."

"Very true; but if she should happen to have on board anything contraband of war, she doubtless would be considered a lawful prize."

"What would be done with her in that case?"

"Who knows? She might be set on fire and left to burn, she might be sunk at once by a few shots, or she might be taken to the nearest Russian port and condemned."

"And what will become of us?" asked the young correspondent, interestedly.

"Ah, my friend, that will depend, like the ultimate fate of all mankind, upon the lives we have led. If they are free from suspicious acts, all will doubtless go well with us; but if otherwise, then, pouf! who can tell what may happen?"

At this moment a steward notified M. Delar that he was wanted below, and for the next ten minutes Dunster was left alone to gaze moodily at the sullen war-ships that threatened to interfere so seriously with his plans.

Then came his own turn to be summoned for examination, and, filled with mixed curiosity and apprehension, he made his way to the saloon. Its only occupants were the Russian officer, M. Delar, and half a dozen heavily armed marines. While Dunster was wondering what had become of the captain and purser, the officer addressed him by name, and asked if he could advance any reason why he should not be considered a prisoner of war.

"Certainly I can," answered our lad, hotly. "I am an American citizen, as I have the papers to prove, on a peaceful mission to Japan."

"It is conceded that you are of American birth," said the officer, "but you are believed to be of Russian parentage. At any rate, you wear about your neck a holy ikon of the Russian Church. In spite of this, you are suspected of being a traitor to Russia and devoted to the interests of Japan."

"That would be a very serious charge," replied Dunster, quietly, "if it were true, or if by any means you could make it appear true. As I know that to be impossible, your implied threat does not cause me the slightest uneasiness. I am an American citizen, and demand to be treated as such."

"Possibly, then, our information is unreliable, and you are not interested in a submarine torpedo-

boat shipped on this very steamer to the Japanese government, though billed merely as machinery and consigned to Shanghai."

In spite of Dunster's desperate efforts at self-control, he knew that his face suddenly had become pale and then vividly flushed. At that moment he could not have framed a suitable reply to the startling accusation to have saved his life. Fortunately he was spared the necessity, for the officer continued:

"If you are not thus interested, it seems strange that you should, at great inconvenience to yourself, have accompanied that same submarine on a goods train across the American continent, should have engaged passage with it on a freighter instead of sailing by a swifter and far more comfortable passenger ship, and that you should have taken these pictures of anything so little picturesque as crated machinery in process of transfer from one conveyance to another."

Thus saying, the officer handed Dunster half a dozen of the very photographs the latter had taken at Seattle, and which, until that moment, he had supposed to be in the roll-holder of his camera, still undeveloped.

For a few seconds the lad stared at them in amazed silence. Then, carelessly flinging them down, he said:

"I never before saw those photographs, and have nothing to say regarding them. As I already have stated, I am an American citizen, relying upon the papers issued to me by my government for proof

of my claim, and for protection; unless, indeed," he added, bitterly, "I have been robbed of them."

"Certainly not," replied the officer, politely. "I have them here, and am personally responsible for their safe-keeping until such time as their production may be demanded."

As Dunster had left those same papers in his state-room, locked in his suit-case, this was not reassuring.

"In the mean time," continued the officer, "as this ship is the prize of his Imperial Majesty's cruiser *Rurik*, I am obliged to ask you to give me your parole, as your fellow-passenger, M. Delar, has just done, that you will make no attempt to leave her, or to escape beyond Russian jurisdiction until the merits of your case have been decided by a court of inquiry."

"If I refused to give it, what would happen?" inquired Dunster.

"I should, unhappily, be compelled to confine you to your cabin under guard, and the restraint would be continued after we reached port," replied the officer.

For a moment the lad thought rapidly; then he said: "Very well, sir, I give my promise not to attempt to escape within the time limit you have fixed. Do you want me to take oath to it?"

"Certainly not," replied the officer, smiling. "The word of a gentleman, and especially of one so recently a cadet officer in the American navy, is more than sufficient. Also, I am happy that you

have made this decision; for not only would it be most unpleasant to order you into confinement, but I should have missed your company, which I hope to enjoy while we continue to cruise together. My name is Zemaloffsky, commander in the navy of his Imperial Majesty the Czar of Russia, and I look forward to meeting again at dinner the Monsieur Brownleigh, of America."

With this the officer rose, gathered up his papers, and, followed by his guard of marines, took his departure, leaving the two passengers sole occupants of the saloon.

"It decidedly is an unpleasant interruption to our voyage," remarked the Frenchman.

"Decidedly," answered Dunster, shortly, at the same time turning into his own state-room and closing its door behind him. He did not wish to converse with his fellow-passenger just then, nor with any one until he had carefully considered the situation.

His first move was to examine his suit-case, which he found locked as he had left it, but his papers were gone. Also, the roll-holder of his camera was empty. His next discovery was that his revolver, together with its ammunition, had been taken.

"I wish I knew whether I had been robbed before the Russians came on board," he mused. "Yes, it must have been, for those pictures could not have been developed since. I wonder if it could have been that wretched Frenchman? If I had proof that it was, I would make him smart for it before we left

this ship. But how could he know, how could any one know, that I wore what that Russian was pleased to call an 'ikon' about my neck? That is a mystery."

The mystery would have been cleared promptly enough could Dunster have seen M. Delar at that moment lying in the upper berth of an adjoining state-room with one eye glued to a tiny hole bored through the thin partition and intently watching his neighbor's movements.

But our lad had no suspicion of this, and shortly afterwards, when he met the Frenchman on deck, the latter at once began to relate his own grievances.

"They have broken into my cabin and robbed me of everything!" he exclaimed, bitterly. "Did they take your money?"

"No," replied Dunster, "because I had none."

"Well, I had. It was one thousand francs in gold notes, and t ey have taken every sou. But they will be obliged to make restitution—the canaille! They will be taught that a citizen of the great French republic may not be robbed with impunity on the high seas. Do you know what else they have done?"

"No—what?"

"They have transferred our crew, including captain, purser, and engineers, to one of their own ships, and replaced them here with a Russian crew."

"Where do you suppose they are taking us to?" asked Dunster.

"I know not; but, as you may see, our course has been changed, and at full speed we are headed for the north."

"Then we must be bound for Vladivostok!" exclaimed the young American. "Of course, this is the Vladivostok squadron, for I remember that the *Rurik* was one of them. How stupid of me not to have thought of that before! And the others must be the *Rossia* and the *Gromoboi*, for the *Bogatyr* was wrecked on their very first attempt to leave the harbor after war was declared."

"Yes," added M. Delar, "her steam steering-gear went wrong in some way, just as she was passing the most dangerous reef in the harbor, and before they could get the supplementary gear to working the ship had sheered and struck. Afterwards it was discovered that the gear had been purposely injured by some person on board, probably a Jap disguised as a Chinese table-boy. Anyway, a lot of Chinese who had been on board were shot on suspicion as soon as they got ashore."

"You seem to know a lot about the affair," said Dunster, regarding his companion curiously.

"Oh yes," replied the other. "I have told to you why I was coming out here, and, of course, a person in my line of business learns much that is not made public. I hope, by-the-way, that you will not drop any hint about what I have told you of myself," he added, with an appearance of anxiety, "for it would go hard with me if it were known. I have declared that I merely am a globe-trotter on

my way around the world, and that I came by this steamer because of the cheapness."

"All right," replied Dunster. "I won't give you away. I wish, though, that you had not told me."

"Ah, mon amie! How could I help it, when you with such frankness gave me the information of your own plan to become a correspondent de journal? And now I am very sorry that these Russians have such a suspicion of you, for it may make to you much trouble."

"How do you suppose they got hold of those photographs?" demanded Dunster, turning sharply on the other and gazing full in his face.

"I know now! It is that purser," replied M. Delar, returning the lad's gaze without flinching. "For I remember to have seen him devil-up some photograph several times, and I think much about it. Of course, he only would have a key to your cabin."

"I wonder if I have misjudged this fellow, after all, and if I can trust him?" thought our lad. "If I only dared to, I expect he could help me a lot. Yes, I believe I will. There isn't any one else, and I don't see how the situation can be made much worse than it is. Monsieur Delar," he added, aloud, "as we seem to be equally up against it, I have—"

At that moment the two passengers were joined in their promenade by the Russian commander, whose presence evidently was so distasteful to the Frenchman that the latter, muttering an excuse, almost immediately went below.

When, late that same night, Dunster, unable to sleep and going on deck for a breath of fresh air, caught a glimpse, through an imperfectly curtained window, of his fellow-passenger and the Russian commander laughing, chatting, and drinking together in the captain's room, he no longer regretted that his attempt to confide in the Frenchman had been interrupted.

CHAPTER XIV

DUNSTER TAKES THE WHEEL

At the breaking-out of the war between big Russia and little Japan the powerful navy of the latter country was badly scattered. Many of its ships were in the home waters of the Baltic, ten thousand miles from the scene of hostilities, and many more were shut up in the Black Sea by the provisions of a treaty that forbade the passage of the Dardanelles by armored vessels. At the same time a powerful fleet, equal in strength to the entire Japanese navy, was in Eastern waters ready to give battle. That is, they presumably were ready, and should have been ready, but they were not. Most of them were at Port Arthur, where their officers spent as much time as possible on shore and attended as little as possible to their duties on shipboard. Four of the finest cruisers and several torpedo-boats were at Vladivostok, nearly twelve hundred miles by sea from Port Arthur. Another superb cruiser, together with a gun-boat, was at Chemulpo, in Korea, three hundred miles distant from the main fleet, while other gun-boats lay in various Chinese harbors.

Instantly upon the outbreak of war, the Japanese,

keenly alert and fully prepared, sprang into such aggressive action that within twenty-four hours they had destroyed the ships at Chemulpo, crippled and driven to the heavily defended inner harbor of Port Arthur the main Russian fleet, and had established a blockade of that most important stronghold. Then, in quick succession, they captured the fine, big passenger ships belonging to the Siberian Railway system, compelled all Russian gun-boats in neutral ports to disarm and tie up until the close of the war, and sent a small force to watch ice-bound Vladivostok in the far north. At the same time a great fleet of transports, bearing hundreds of thousands of troops, issued from the nearest Japanese ports and sped swiftly towards designated landing-places on the coasts of Korea and Manchuria.

When the Russians bottled up in Port Arthur awoke to their danger, and to the fact that their aggressive enemy could no longer be despised, they made such desperate efforts to break the established blockade and to recover for their fleet the freedom of the seas that the Japanese were obliged to gather at that point every available ship to maintain the advantage thus far gained. At the same time they were compelled to keep a flying squadron in the Strait of Korea to protect the stream of transports and supply-ships constantly passing to and fro, and also to prevent a possible junction between the Vladivostok cruisers and those of Port Arthur.

It was to avoid this squadron that the Vladivos-

tok ships, when making a dash for the open, later in the season, crossed the Sea of Japan, passed through Tsugaru Strait between the two largest Japanese islands, and then laid a course down the eastern coast that would intersect the track of all west-bound ships making for Japanese ports. The one they most wanted to capture was the big freighter *Cochise*, concerning whose cargo and movements they apparently had full information.

They had met with no opposition, had found excellent sport and target practice in the destruction of a number of Japanese fishing-vessels and small coasters, and now they had captured the very prize they had set out to gain. Moreover, they had done this just as the state of their coal supply warned them that it was high time to head back towards the well-stocked bunkers of the only Asiatic port in their possession still open to them. So it happened that the day following the capture of the *Cochise*, the very day on which Dunster Brownleigh had confidently expected to land at Yokohama, saw that ship, guarded by Admiral Yezen's cruisers, steaming northward towards the Hokkaido. That night the squadron, with all lights extinguished, slipped through the Tsugaru Strait, passing unseen within range of the heavy guns mounted on Hakodate head, and two days later they were within sight of Vladivostok.

In the mean time, though the squadron had made its venturesome cruise unmolested, its every movement, from the time of its entrance into Japanese

waters until it left them, had been noted by swift scout-boats sent out from Hakodate, Yokosuka, and various intermediate ports. These, unarmed for attack, but capable of tremendous speed, fitted with gas-engines, emitting no smoke to betray their presence, painted a dull lead color, and lying so low in the water as to be invisible beyond a two-mile range, had hovered about the Russian squadron, and had sent from coast stations frequent reports of its location and operations. Thus its capture of the *Cochise* was promptly noted, and reported to Tokio a few hours later.

From Tokio the news was flashed up to Hakodate, together with an order that within fifteen minutes of its receipt sent a swift torpedo-boat dashing out of the harbor headed westward into the stormy waters of the Japan Sea. Thirty hours later the same boat, wave-battered and salt-encrusted, appeared off the Manchurian coast in the vicinity of Usuri Bay, and was quickly lost to sight amid the labyrinth of fog-enshrouded islands guarding its mouth.

Three days later the cruiser squadron, accompanied by their prize, hove in sight, and with colors flying from every masthead prepared for a triumphal entry into the harbor of Vladivostok. Just outside its narrow mouth they encountered the Chinese fishing fleet of big sampans and small junks that makes daily excursions to sea to supply the city with one of its chief articles of food.

These craft, propelled by square, brown sails, or in times of calm by sculling-oars of great size, worked

by several men at each one, made ludicrous haste to vacate the path of the on-coming ships. Their occupants had learned by bitter experience that it is beneath the dignity of a Russian war-ship to swerve from its course by so much as the fraction of an inch to avoid running down so contemptible an object as a Chinese fishing-boat. So all of them, except one, bore away in a direction that would carry them clear, and, aiding their sluggish sails by industrious sculling, made good their margin of safety. The one boat that failed to get promptly out of the way was quite the largest of the fleet, but its crew seemed paralyzed by terror or utterly incompetent to manage the craft, for their utmost efforts at the sculling-oars only served to turn her in a circle directly ahead of the on-rushing ships. Only by a miracle did she avoid the leading cruiser, which grazed her so closely that the Russian sailors spat contemptuously down on her decks. She still was floundering and circling as the second cruiser came up, but had managed to work into a position of safety by as much as a score of yards. The third ship in line was the *Cochise*, and from her pilot-house, in which during the entire voyage he had been a privileged guest, Dunster Brownleigh gazed with eager curiosity at the quaint fishing-boats and the approaching land, with its innumerable points of interest. All at once his attention was directed to the queer-acting junk that had been left behind the others, and which, having already made two of the narrowest possible escapes from destruction,

seemed about to tempt fate for the third time. Leaving her position of safety, she actually was trying to recross the path of the cruisers, as though in an insane effort to rejoin her companions. In another minute she would lie directly in the course of the huge freighter that would crush and sink her like an egg-shell.

Beside himself with excitement, Dunster sprang out on deck, yelling and vehemently gesticulating to the imbecile junk.

"Luff, you lubbers!" he shouted. "Luff up sharp or we'll cut you down! Oh, the infernal idiots!"

On the bridge overhead the Russian commander and M. Delar were laughing at him. In the pilot-house a stolid-faced Russian quartermaster gazed fixedly at the compass-card as though nothing else in all the world mattered.

Suddenly this man was pushed violently to one side, and other hands than his were whirling to hard-a-port the little wheel that, with the mighty aid of steam, controlled every movement of the great ship. Before the amazed sailor could recover his outraged senses and regain his rightful position, the deed had been accomplished. For the first time in history a ship sailing under the Russian flag had departed from her chosen course to avoid sinking a contemptible Chinese junk.

The Russian commander was storming overhead, and hurling down volleys of incomprehensible oaths; while the quartermaster, who had in turn pushed

Dunster violently from the wheel, was glaring at him and rehearsing some of the penalties that ought to be visited upon a person so presumptuous as to interfere with the steering of a ship. But the young American cared not a rap what was said, though he understood much more of it than they supposed. He had saved the junk, which even then was bumping and scraping along the side of the great ship, and that was enough to make him feel well content.

Having seen the *Cochise* resume her proper course, the Russian commander descended from the bridge, and, his face white with rage, ordered Dunster into his state-room.

"You are under arrest, sir, from this moment, and no longer on parole!" he roared. "We will see if the authority of Russia is with impunity to be defied in her own waters!"

As the lad turned, without a word, to obey this order, his eye caught a sight so startling that he gazed at it incapable of motion. The unlucky junk that already had caused so much trouble had drifted directly in front of the third cruiser, which was following exactly the course taken by the others. Even as Dunster looked he saw several figures leap from the junk and disappear beneath the waves. Then came the collision, and at the same instant an explosion that seemed to lift the cruiser bodily from the water.

CHAPTER XV

A "BOY" WHO SPOKE AMERICAN

So terrific was the explosion resulting from the collision between the third cruiser and the junk which, but for Dunster's prompt action, would have struck the *Cochise*, that for a moment every soul on board the last-named ship was paralyzed into a motionless silence, while each person glanced at the startled face of his nearest neighbor, as though seeking an explanation of the awful happening. Then ensued a bedlam of orders and counter-orders, an aimless rushing to and fro, and a confused jangling of engine-room gongs that seemed to call for slow speed, full speed, stopping, backing, and going ahead, all at once. But these conflicting orders were unheeded, for every engineer, oiler, fireman, and coal-passer was madly rushing for the upper deck, under the impression that their own ship was sinking. Before they could be driven back to their duties the *Cochise* was fully a mile from the scene of disaster. Then she was stopped, and an order was given to lower boats. The Russian crew, unfamiliar with American patent davits, were so slow at this work that long before a single boat from the *Cochise* reached the crippled cruiser she was

surrounded by the Chinese fishing fleet of junks and sampans, whose crews were picking up swimmers, wounded men, floating bodies, and fragments of wreckage.

Of the junk that had caused the catastrophe only a few splintered sticks scattered over a wide area remained. The great cruiser, that but a moment before had arrogantly ploughed the sea in the conscious pride of her terrible strength, still floated, but that was all. Her bow had been blown away, and all the forward part of the ship was a mass of wreckage. She had settled by the head until her stern, with propeller still madly revolving, was lifted clear of the water; but evidently some transverse water-tight bulkhead remained intact and prevented her from sinking. Even after the awful cloud of smoke from the explosion had drifted away, she was so shrouded by her own steam pouring from port and hatchway that not for ten minutes could her true condition be appreciated.

The first rescuers who gained her deck were confronted by an appalling scene of death and destruction. Dozens of her crew had been killed outright, and as many more had been scalded to death by the escaping steam; while others still lived, but with their poor bodies so mangled that speedy death would be a blessed relief. Scores had leaped into the sea, where many were rescued by the fishing-boats.

Dunster Brownleigh had actively assisted in lowering the boats of the *Cochise*, and even had at-

tempted to take a place in one of them, but had been detected and sternly ordered to remain on board. So he was forced to be content with viewing the thrilling scene from a distance, and while so doing he was approached by M. Delar.

"Isn't it horrible?" exclaimed our lad as he became conscious of the other's presence.

"Indeed, yes, horrible beyond words," replied the Frenchman. "And well do I realize that but for your noble action this ship, instead of that one, would have been blown up, and we, instead of those poor wretches, would now be dead, mangled, or scalded. It is dreadful to contemplate; but also it is a cause for such gratitude that I, for one, tender to the brave Monsieur Brownleigh a heart with thanks filled to overflowing."

In the whirl of excitement crowding the past few minutes, Dunster had not given a thought to the narrow escape of the ship he was on or to his own share in effecting it; and now it was so overwhelming that, ere he could find words to reply to the Frenchman, the latter again was speaking.

"But the mystery of it all," he said, "is how you should have known of the attempt to blow up this ship, or which of those many boats was prepared for so gigantic a task. You never before have been to this place?

"No, I never have."

"Nor even have seen a Chinese junk until now?"

"No."

"It is not known to me that you have been in

correspondence with any person outside of this ship since leaving America, and I have been your most constant companion."

"No, I have held no communication with any person outside this ship."

"Then how, in the name of all the saints, did you know?" queried the Frenchman, his face expressive of eager curiosity.

"I didn't," replied Dunster.

"You did not know that the junk was a mine of destruction?" retorted the other, incredulously.

"I did not."

"Then am I still more bewildered to account for your insane action. Why did you take the terrible risk of altering the course of this ship? Did you not know that any officer on board would have been justified in shooting you down?"

"No, I didn't know it, and it wouldn't have made any difference if I had."

"But why did you do it?"

"To save the lives of those on board the junk, of course."

"To save the lives of those Chinese swine you risked your own? Ah, my friend, it is impossible! You cannot expect me to believe such a thing."

"It is true, all the same," replied Dunster, hotly. "But I don't care a snap of my fingers whether you believe it or not."

Thus saying, he ended the conversation by walking away, leaving the Frenchman to stare after him, at the same time muttering:

"The imbecile! Of course I do not believe him. Of course he knew, and if I mistake not he now has fastened the chain so tight about his neck that it never any more can come loose. I might feel sorry for him if he had not so terribly la suffisance; but now—bah! I do not care. He is a fool."

The stricken ship was towed to the nearest beach where she could be sufficiently patched to get her to a dry-dock; and, after some hours of delay, the surviving cruisers, together with the *Cochise*, steamed slowly into port with colors at half-mast. In company with M. Delar, Dunster was allowed to go on shore. The launch that carried them to the jetty reached it just as one of the fishing sampans, with several survivors from the wrecked cruiser, was moored alongside. Her crew immediately began to transfer their helpless passengers to the shore, where Red Cross ambulances awaited them, and Dunster was obliged to stand aside to allow one of the stretchers to pass. A half-stifled exclamation drew his attention to one of the bearers, a Chinese youth, evidently of the coolie class, who was staring at him as though the young American were some rare curiosity. Dunster had barely time to note that the garments of this person were wringing wet, as though he had recently been in the water, when a white-bloused soldier gave the stretcher bearer a shove with the butt of his musket and harshly bade him move on.

Under the guidance of M. Delar, who seemed quite at home in Vladivostok, the two passengers entered

a drosky and were driven up the steep hill from the water-front to the upper town, where they were deposited at the entrance to the Hotel Tissier. A few minutes later our lad found himself the sole occupant of a room on the second floor of a white-painted, green-shuttered, wooden building, that seemed fairly comfortable, as hotel rooms in that part of the world go, but which could be reached only by passing through an adjoining apartment, now occupied by M. Delar.

Dunster did not like this arrangement, but had been told that only these rooms were vacant, and that he might change as soon as another became available. M. Delar, politely regretting the inconvenience, had given him his choice of them, and so there was nothing to do but make the best of an uncomfortable situation.

While he was unpacking his bag and wondering what would be the outcome of the strange position in which the fates had placed him, there came a knock on his door, and M. Delar presented himself.

"I have ventured," said the visitor, "to bring a servant for Monsieur Brownleigh's inspection, knowing that he would immediately want one."

"Thank you for taking the trouble," said Dunster, "but you are mistaken in thinking that I need a servant."

"Pardon; but possibly it is you who are mistaken," replied the Frenchman, smiling. "In this place a servant is a necessity to every gentleman. He will care for your room, wait on you at table,

procure much of your provision, run of your errand, and in fact do so many thing that one may not get on without him. Besides, this boy speaks a little English, which is very rare for a servant in these parts. For that reason, also, he demands one ruble per day. That is greatly expensive, but I believe him to be worth it."

"How much is a ruble?" asked Dunster.

"It is in reality about four francs, or eighty cents in your money, but it may be regarded as one dollar, since it is divided into one hundred kopecks."

"Then I must pay the servant one dollar per day?"

"Yes. That is his extravagant charge for speaking the English."

"Is he a Russian?"

"Certainly not," laughed M. Delar. "He is of the Chinese, as are all the servants in this place."

"Well, if I must have a servant, I suppose it is best to have one who can understand what I say to him. Where is this English-speaking Chinaman?"

"I will send him," replied the Frenchman, at the same time leaving the room.

Dunster heard him call "Boy!" and a moment later a young Chinese appeared at the door, bowing and smiling. For a moment Dunster fancied he had seen him before, but said to himself that of course he had not, and that all Chinese looked alike, anyway.

"Do you speak English?" he asked of the nodding figure.

"Me spik Melican," was the answer.

"That's as good, if not better. What is your name?"

"Name Sing-Hi."

"Sing for short, I suppose. Well, Sing, how much do you expect me to pay you?"

"Me git um queek," was the smiling reply.

"What?"

"Me spik Melican," answered the "boy," nodding his head rapidly.

"So you have said, but that wasn't the question. How much am I to pay you?"

"Name Sing-Hi."

"Look here," exclaimed Dunster, wrathfully, "I'll make you sing low if you don't quit this foolishness. What do you mean by it?"

"Me spik Melican," asserted the "boy" stoutly, but with a somewhat apprehensive expression, and all Dunster's efforts failed to win another intelligible word.

In spite of his disappointment at Sing-Hi's limited vocabulary, he decided to engage him, and afterwards found no occasion to regret having done so, for a more cheerful, willing, resourceful chap it would be hard to find. He seemed to know by instinct just what his new master wanted and when he desired it. Also, he knew how and where to get it. He proved a good cook, and to Dunster's amazement seemed to understand the American way of preparing and serving certain dishes. In fact, he became so invaluable that on the second day of

their acquaintance his employer wondered that he had ever thought of getting along without him.

"Sing-Hi," he said, as he watched the blue-clad figure busily engaged in cleaning a travel-stained coat, "you play such a snappy game that if you could only understand the signals a little better I believe I'd take you on for the whole season."

Of course, Dunster had not expected to be understood, and so was wholly unprepared for the remarkable effect produced by these words. Sing-Hi looked from the window and saw M. Delar walking down the street, went to the communicating door between the two rooms, satisfied himself by a quick glance that the Frenchman's room was empty, locked the door, and, returning to his employer, with face aglow and narrow eyes sparkling, he said:

"Dun Brown, it is not now the ballfoot game we play, but the game of war with that Rus-si-an, and no ru-als but to kill him. Oh! my friend Dun Brown! Do you not any more know me?"

CHAPTER XVI

SENTENCED TO BE SHOT

It was so incredible that Sing-Hi should be Takahaki, and that Takahaki, formerly a cadet at Annapolis, then an officer in the Japanese navy, and last heard from as one of a forlorn hope dashing into the mine-strewn harbor of Port Arthur, should be Sing-Hi, that for a moment Dunster gazed at the smiling figure before him in speechless amazement.

"Are you really my friend, Taki Matsu?" he finally asked, still doubting. "If so, why are you here in this disguise? How did you get here? I thought you were at Port Arthur. Do you not know that discovery would mean certain death, and that I could not lift a hand to save you?"

"Yes, Dun Brown, I am your friend, Takimat, and I am here because you are here with that boat submarine that you bring for Japan."

"How did you know I was bringing it?"

"I am not know it was you. It is said only that one man to represent the builder will come, and I am detailed to receive that boat at Hakodate, to make him ready for the service, and then to have him in command. In a destroyer I go to Hakodate and there we wait. We know of the ships out from

this place, but may not attack them, only watch. Then in a hurry we get order: 'Proceed quick, vicinity Vladivostok. Await return of Rus-si-an squadron. Plan destruction of *Cochise*, containing submarine, now prize of *Rurik*.' So we come, we hide, we make of junk a floating mine, and in it I seek to diss-troy that *Cochise*."

"You, Taki!" exclaimed Dunster. "Were you in command of that wretched junk?"

"Yes, Dun Brown, I am have that great honor. So I try and put her in front of *Cochise*, knowing that no ship of the Rus-si-an will turn to save poor Chinese junk. But *Cochise* did turn, I know not why, and so save himself. Then I do what is next best thing and blow up that cruiser, but also I save myself for try once more and diss-troy that submarine. I am pick from the water and brought on the shore where some soldier say, 'Go to work, pig!' and I stretcher carry. Then I see my friend Dun Brown, and almost I holler. But I say, Stop, he will need servant, and I come here quick for that honorable position. I meet that Frenchman. He hear me speak some English word, and ask me if I want easy job for which he give me plenty eat and twenty kopeck each day. I say maybe so, what is it? He say it is be servant of one Englishman who is prisoner, and rip-port to him every day what that prisoner will say and do. Also, to give him every day eighty kopeck of what that prisoner will pay. Also, to speak so little of English that the prisoner may not know that I am understand anything. I

say twenty kopeck is very little money for do so much thing, and he say, go away then, I find other man. Then I say, No, your excellency, I very poor man, with old father and mother very hungry, so that I must have even such little money, and will try be servant. For two day he listen, listen, all the time, and I am 'fraid to speak. Now he is go see governor-general, and I find that chance. But, my friend, my dear friend Dun Brown, why do you come to this place of so great danger? Is it that you may be shot for spy, or sent to mines for life? Are you not knowing that the Delar man is one Rossky, who goes to America for find out things, who work in that ship-yard and see you there, who know all the time of that submarine, and send here word of it? For to get it only is why those Vladivostok ship go out. That now is known. Also—"

"Taki," broke in Dunster at this point, "I came because I couldn't help it. I have told you why I hated Russia, and why my ancestors fought her. Of course, I did not mean to come here. I expected to land in Japan, and there get that submarine ready for business. I am supposed to be a correspondent, and had papers proving me to be one; but they have been taken from me. I came on the *Cochise*, and it was I who altered her course so that she should not strike your junk. Would you still have tried to blow up that ship, Taki, if you had known that I was on board?"

"Yes, Dun Brown, for the Mikado I must even diss-troy my best friend, but also would I diss-troy

myself at same time. If I blow you up, I, too, would not be save. But why—"

At this moment came a sharp rap on the door, and an effort was made to open it.

Takahaki sprang to unlock it, while Dunster dropped into a chair and picked up a book. As the door was opened, Commander Zemaloffsky, closely followed by M. Delar, entered the room. Both visitors glanced quickly but searchingly about the apartment.

"We are sorry to have interrupted Monsieur Brownleigh's conversation," said the Russian officer, gazing keenly at Dunster. "But an affair of some urgency must be our excuse."

"Conversation?" repeated the young American, as though not comprehending the other's meaning. "Ah, yes! You perhaps overheard me reading aloud to myself. I often do so when there is no one to talk to."

"Your English-speaking servant?" suggested the Russian.

"My English-speaking servant!" laughed Dunster. "That, of course, is your joke, monsieur; but it is a sorry one for me, seeing that I am paying a ruble each day to hear this parrot of a Chinaman repeat over and over three phrases of my native tongue. 'Me spik Melican,' 'Name Sing-Hi,' 'Me git um queek,' seems to be the extent of his English at present, and I have little hope of teaching him more, for he appears very stupid."

"Undoubtedly so," agreed the other, "but prob-

ably he is as good as you will find among the low-class Chinese. Without exception they are ignorant as pigs, and the Japs are no better. All these yellow heathen simply are imitators, parrots if you like. But, monsieur, let us speak of your own affairs, which have reached a grave crisis. For two days have you been on trial—"

"Have I?" queried Dunster. "I did not know it."

"Yes. That is, your case has been considered in all its aspects by a court-martial composed of the highest military officials now in Vladivostok, and I am commissioned to deliver to you their decision. In spite of your American papers, you are believed to be a Russian subject acting in the interests of Japan, Russia's most deadly enemy, and therefore a traitor to our imperial master, the Czar. For this crime there is but one punishment, and it is death. This being the case, I have the honor to inform you that you are sentenced to be shot at sunset of this very evening."

For a moment Dunster stared at the man who had so calmly uttered these awful words with a white face and incredulous eyes.

"You cannot mean that!" he finally gasped, as he stood clinching the back of a chair for support against the deadly faintness that had seized him. "You are joking, of course, and attempting to frighten me. Such a thing as a trial without the accused being heard in his own defence, or at least being present, is unknown in these days. Even if

such a farce had taken place, I should appeal to the American consul for protection, or, at any rate, to see that I was given a trial with legal formalities and the opportunity of preparing a defence. I easily can prove that I am American both by birth and citizenship; and if so much as a hair of my head is harmed without every opportunity being granted me for producing that evidence, your government will be called to account by mine. And I warn you, sir, that the day on which Russia arouses the wrath of the American people will be the sorriest in all her sorrowful history. But, of course, you are only attempting to frighten me."

"Alas! my dear Monsieur Brownleigh, I am not," replied the officer. "You do not seem to consider that this is a time of war, that Vladivostok is no longer a commercial port open to the trade of the world, but a military base, subject to the conditions of blockade, with consular service suspended and civil government replaced by martial law. Not only are you charged with treason against our most illustrious master, but also with having deliberately and of set purpose caused the destruction of one of the imperial cruisers but three days since in this very harbor. No, my friend, a just sentence has been passed upon you, and it surely will be executed unless—"

"Unless what?" asked Dunster, as the other paused.

"Unless you agree to certain conditions that I am authorized to offer, in which case the extreme

penalty may be commuted for a milder form of punishment."

"What are they?"

"That you will place your knowledge of submarines at the service of the Russian government, and supervise for it, as you proposed to do for Japan, the assembling and outfitting of the boat so fortunately come into our possession with the capture of the *Cochise*. That, when the submarine is ready for sea, you will serve in her as engineer, giving instruction to the full extent of your knowledge to every person designated to receive it, and at the same time will obey implicitly the orders of the commanding officer. By accepting these conditions, and pledging your word for their fulfilment, you may at least save your life, which otherwise will be forfeited."

Of course, the Russian officer did not use the fluent English here recorded, and in his efforts to make his meaning clear he frequently had to rely upon the aid of M. Delar. Now that individual, turning to Dunster, said:

"I urge you to accept this proposition, Brownleigh. Under the circumstances I call it a most liberal one; and, anyway, it cannot make the slightest difference to an American which side he serves in this most regrettable war."

Turning scornfully from the man whom he now knew to be the cause of all his present trouble, Dunster addressed himself to M. Zemaloffsky, saying:

"Before giving you an answer, sir, I demand to

be relieved of the presence of this contemptible spy, with whom I refuse to hold any further communication. He is—"

"Monsieur," interrupted the Russian, sternly, "it is not for you to make demands, but only to accept or reject, without delay, the proposition presented. What is your answer—yes or no?"

For a minute Dunster hesitated, with his mind in a ferment of indecision, while the two men searched his face as though to read his very thoughts. Passing beyond them, his eye fell on Takahaki, who, during the foregoing scene, had been stolidly engaged in removing stains from a coat, apparently without giving heed to what the other occupants of the room were saying or doing. Now he was gazing intently at his friend, and as their eyes met he almost imperceptibly nodded his head. Then he resumed his task as though absolutely indifferent to everything else. But his signal was understood, and in an instant Dunster's indecision had vanished.

"Monsieur Zemaloffsky," he said, in a firm voice, "I accept your proposition. I will serve the Russian government to the extent of putting the submarine into as perfect condition as my knowledge will permit, and afterwards I will act as her engineer to the best of my ability, obeying implicitly the orders of the officer in command. At the same time, I want it distinctly understood that I make this promise upon compulsion and under protest; also that I shall use every effort to call the attention of the American government to my situation."

CHAPTER XVII

COUNT CASIMIR, OF WARSAW

At one end of the Vladivostok water-front is a complete naval station, containing docks, ship-yards, arsenal, machine-shops, etc. At the other end of the town are the warehouses and wharves of commerce, and beyond them is the merchant-ship anchorage. Here, too, crowning a low hill, is the massive log stockade of the Vladivostok prison, in which are detained such Siberian exiles as had almost succeeded in making their escape on board outgoing vessels, only to be detected at the last moment and returned to the chains that, after years of ceaseless effort, they fondly believed they had cast off forever. It is one of the saddest prisons in the world; for, standing on the very brink of freedom, it is the burial-place of hope. From it prisoners were sent to the living death of Saghalin, the "Isle of the Lost," as it was called when under Russian rule; or, if their identity could be discovered, they were returned to the dreadful places in the remote interior from which, through sufferings far worse than death, they had effected escapes months, and even years, before.

To this stronghold of sorrow was Dunster Brown-

leigh taken, immediately upon agreeing to Commander Zemaloffsky's proposition, by a couple of soldiers who had waited in the hotel apartment adjoining his, and he was told that here he must remain until his services should be required.

Although thus thrown into one of the worst of Siberian prisons, and allowed no intercourse with the outside world, the young American was granted certain privileges not shared by his fellow-unfortunates. Thus, he was allowed to draw money on his own letter of credit, to hire a servant, to rent from the warden a single-room log-hut in which to live, and in it to surround himself with a number of rude comforts. Above all, he was permitted to retain all the hair of his head, while most of the prisoners were made at once ridiculous and conspicuous beyond all chance of escaping recognition as a convict by having one-half of the head and face clean shaven. At the time of his entrance to the prison, Dunster's name was taken from him, and thereafter he was known only as "No. 40."

When permission was granted him to maintain a servant at his own expense, he was asked whether he would continue to employ Sing-Hi, who could be allowed to wait on him only from sunrise to sunset, and must be expelled from the prison at night, or if he would prefer to employ one of the convicts whose services would be at his disposal at all hours, he promptly replied that, stupid and high-priced as Sing-Hi was, he preferred to retain the Chinese "boy" who had become used to his ways. This

was entirely satisfactory to the authorities, who continued to regard Sing-Hi as devoted to their interests, and the latter received orders to watch his master in prison as closely as before, making daily reports to M. Delar of all that he said and did. In order to provide him with something to report, Dunster prepared, with every appearance of secrecy, a number of letters to various American officials at home and in Japan, as well as to his own father. These he gave to his servant, one at a time, with promises of large rewards if he should succeed in smuggling them from the city. Of course, every one of these was promptly delivered to M. Delar, who not only praised the "boy" for his faithfulness to the Russian cause, but allowed him to retain the money given him by Dunster for expenses.

Besides preparing these letters for the entertainment of his enemies, Dunster found so little to occupy him in that dreary prison that time hung heavily on his hands. The great, cheerless barracks, crowded with idle convicts, sleeping, quarrelling, or gambling, so reeked with filth and vermin that after a single inspection he was thankful not to be obliged to enter them again. He spent much time in tramping briskly from end to end of the prison yard, and always while thus walking he sought to plan some means of escape from the perilous situation into which the fates had thrown him. On one occasion he was so preoccupied by his thoughts that he carelessly brushed against an aged man who was tottering slowly along in the same direction.

The collision was a slight one, but, to Dunster's dismay, it was sufficient to overbalance the old man and cause him to fall heavily.

Springing to the stranger's assistance, the young American raised him to his feet with profuse apologies. To these the old man replied with gentle courtesy that it was his own fault for attempting to walk abroad while enfeebled by prolonged illness. Suddenly Dunster realized that both of them were speaking in Polish, and that he thus was revealing his knowledge of that tongue, which, above all things, he desired to keep secret. Also, he noticed that the old man's face had been cut by his fall and was bleeding.

"Come to my quarters, little father, that I may bathe thy face," he said; and the old man consented to be led away. They made slow progress to Dunster's hut, and when they reached it the stranger's exhaustion was so evident that the other persuaded him to lie down on the bed while he wiped his face with a handkerchief dipped in a basin of water.

As Dunster removed the blood and dust from the wrinkled face, he noted that its features, though ravaged by age and long years of suffering, were refined, and that the snow-white beard had not been shaved according to the degrading custom of the prison, nor had the scanty locks been cut. These he gently combed and brushed, while the old man murmured, softly:

"What comfort! What luxury! A bed of such ease! A kerchief of linen! A comb and brush

other than of twigs! Ah, the ages that have passed since I knew such things!"

Our lad was about to question his visitor about himself, when the door was flung open and the warden of the prison entered the room.

Dunster sprang to the attitude of "attention" that he knew the etiquette of the occasion demanded, and the old man on the bed attempted to do likewise, but fell weakly back.

"What have we here?" demanded the intruder. "Do you not know, sir, that without permission you may not have guests? What is your connection with this convict?"

"There is no connection whatever between us," replied Dunster. "I know nothing of him, nor did I ever lay eyes on him until a few minutes since, when, by accident, I knocked him down as we walked in the yard. Then I brought him here to repair as far as possible the damage done. I did not know that it was forbidden. Now I ask your permission to keep him a little longer, until he shall have recovered from the shock, for he seems very feeble."

The man hesitated.

"Of course," continued Dunster, quickly, "I shall be only too glad to meet any expenses that may be incurred by permitting him to remain."

"Very well," replied the warden, "I probably shall have to put on an extra guard at a cost of about ten rubles. If you care to pay that sum the old man may stay with you as long as you like."

A handful of silver being transferred from Dun-

ster's pocket to that of the warden, the latter continued in a more friendly tone: "I must, however, warn you that you will be held largely responsible for the safe-keeping of this prisoner, who is a most desperate character. Some months ago, just before the outbreak of the war, he was detected stowed away in the cargo of an American ship as she was about leaving this port. He fought with the police, and compelled such severe treatment before being subdued that he has been in hospital most of the time since. He had no passport on his person, and has obstinately maintained silence as to his past history; but by diligent inquiry we believe we have located him. If our information is correct, he is a political exile of the most dangerous type, who was sentenced to the mines of Nertchinsk for life. Twice has he escaped, and upon his first recapture he fought so fiercely as to kill two of those who sought to subdue him. For this he was severely punished; but apparently the lesson did him no good, for a few years later he headed an insurrection of convicts in which many were killed; but in the confusion, he, with some others, got away. The others are known to be dead or recaptured, and now we think we have the leader. I was about to order him into irons this very day. So you see you have undertaken no small task, though he is old and appears feeble, an appearance no doubt assumed for a purpose. Look out that he does not attempt to kill you; and call a guard to take him away whenever you tire of his presence, which you are certain

to do in a short time. Wishing you joy of your new plaything, I have the honor to bid you a very good-day."

During this conversation, which the warden had conducted in the broken English of the port, the speakers stood close beside the old man, who lay motionless and with closed eyes as though asleep. Nor did Dunster seek to wake him until Sing-Hi arrived with a bountiful dinner. Then he gently aroused his guest and invited him to partake of food. The latter did not need urging, but ate like one famished, ravenously and in silence. He uttered no word until the meal was ended and Sing-Hi had departed with the dishes, leaving only a samovar of tea. Then, still speaking in Polish, the old man said:

"My son, it is more years than I can count since I have tasted food so delicious and so nourishing as that provided by thy bounty. That thou, a prisoner in this place, art able to procure it arouses my curiosity. May I ask that you gratify the whim of an old man by relating such of thy history as it may be deemed prudent for a stranger to learn? But first tell me where you acquired a knowledge of English, the blessed tongue of freedom?"

"How did you know that I spoke English?" asked Dunster, somewhat startled by this revelation.

"While pretending to be asleep, I overheard your conversation with the warden and the fragment of my own history that he disclosed."

"Then you, too, speak English!" exclaimed the

young American, regarding his guest with increased interest.

"I speak it now very little," was the reply; "but once was it a language dear to me. Also, through it was my life ruined. It is the cause of all my misfortunes."

'You are a Pole?" asked Dunster, with a sudden inspiration.

"I am, or rather I was."

"Of Warsaw?"

"Yes. But why do you ask?"

"And you taught English to the students of the university?"

"My son, it is true," replied the old man, trembling with excitement. "But how have you this knowledge?"

"Are you the Count Casimir?"

"I am number ninety and one," answered the other, gazing furtively about him, and speaking in a tense whisper. "But perhaps once I was called as you say."

"Also, perhaps once you were called—" Here Dunster bent to the other's ear and whispered a single word.

The old man uttered a cry that was almost a scream, sprang to his feet, tottered, and would have fallen had not Dunster caught him and gently laid him on the bed.

"Who art thou that you should know that name?" gasped the exile, staring at the young American with dilated eyes. "Quick, thy history!"

For answer Dunster tore from his neck that which the superstitious Russians had regarded as an ikon and so allowed him to retain, pressed its secret spring, and took from it a bit of paper traced with characters in faded brown. Holding it before the eyes of his guest, he said, slowly:

"Father, I am Casimir, son of thy daughter Mirska, who was born in free America, according to thy instructions herein contained."

"My daughter! Had I then a daughter? How have I wondered and longed to know if I was a father—to know if my child lived, and of its welfare! But in all the years until now there has come to me no word. Oh, blessed Lord! Thou art indeed good and merciful. And thou my son! Blood of my blood, and bone of my bone! To think that I am permitted to gaze upon the face of my own! Nanisha, my wife, my beloved! What of her? Speak quickly, for I am weakened by great joy."

"Thy wife and my grandmother received the note traced with thy blood and followed its instructions. She fled to America, where my mother was born, and grew up to marry my father. My grandmother lived peacefully and happily, though always her thoughts were with thee, until I was old enough to know and love her. Then she passed easily away, filled with the hope of meeting thee."

"And my whole life since that dreadful day has been devoted to regaining her!" muttered the old man. "Always have I been beaten and baffled; but now nothing can longer separate us. No hu-

man force may avail to keep us apart. My son, shortly wilt thou be the Count Casimir, of Warsaw. The name is one borne by kings and hated by Russia; but through all the centuries it is untainted by dishonor. My son—"

As the old man's voice lingered fondly over the words, the door was flung open and Takahaki hurriedly entered the room.

"They are coming!" he exclaimed, breathlessly. "The soldiers are coming to carry away the old man! For him are chains ordered, and the cell of darkness."

CHAPTER XVIII

ASSEMBLING THE SUBMARINE

TAKAHAKI had spoken in English, and the old man understood him.

Dunster started to his feet and would have barred the door, but his grandfather detained him.

"My son," he said, in voice so faint that the young man was obliged to bend his head to catch the words, "resist them not, nor let them know that we are aught but strangers. They cannot harm me now, nor force me to their will. I am summoned by a Power mightier than those of earth. Embrace me, my son, my dear son; sever one of my white locks, and hereafter bend all thy energies to placing it in the hands of my daughter Mirska. 'Mirska'—yes, that was the name on which we had decided should the child be a girl. It is a sweet name, and was my mother's. Now am I to meet them—Mirska, my mother; Nanisha, my wife, and the myriad of glorious ancestors who await my coming. Oh, blessed Saviour! through death dost Thou send the greatest happiness of life. Hark! They come! Then must I go. My son, farewell!"

As the old man sank peacefully back on Dunster's pillow, an officer, halting a file of white

bloused soldiers outside, entered the room. Having no knowledge of English, he did not attempt to address Dunster, but, stepping directly to the bed on which the Count Casimir lay, he said, roughly:

"Get up, old man. Your hour of luxurious living is ended, and you will now return to the chains that so well become you. Move spryly or a sword-prick shall stir thy sluggish blood."

For answer the aged exile opened wide his eyes, and a smile of wonderful radiance flashed across his worn features, but he uttered no word.

The officer raised a hand as though for a blow; but before it could fall he was hurled to the farthest corner of the room. Striking the log wall with a crash, he dropped to the floor, and ere he could regain his feet Dunster Brownleigh towered above him with blazing eyes.

"Dog!" he cried, in vilely accented but perfectly intelligible Russian, "how dare you lift a hand against a noble of Poland? Crawl back on your knees and make to him humble apology for the dastard act. Do it, or by the heavens above you will never leave this room alive! 'Tis useless to look towards the door. That is barred, and you will have issued your last order long before your soldiers can force an entrance. Therefore, crawl, worm, and crawl quickly, before I crush out your human semblance."

So fierce was the speaker's aspect, and so evident was his strength, that the man, recalling tales he had heard of the terrible Americans, dared not disobey.

Thus was presented, in that prison-hut, the startling picture of a Russian officer, rather stout and in full uniform, creeping, with extreme difficulty, on hands and knees, to the bedside of a Siberian convict, and muttering an apology for an act that he had not committed.

"Now stand up and gaze upon your work," commanded the other, sternly, and the man scrambled to his feet. On the pallet before him lay the waxen face of death. During those brief minutes of strife the Count Casimir, of Warsaw, had passed forever beyond the reach of Russian tyranny, and had entered upon the one form of freedom that is absolute. That he had gone happily was evidenced by the smile of utter content that still lingered on the worn features, but that his death had been caused by a sudden spasm of the heart was shown by a trickle of blood from the recent cut on his forehead.

"'Twas cowardly to strike a helpless old man," said Dunster. "And to strike him a blow so terrible as to cause death is an offence that may bring to you very serious trouble. I am not ignorant that no convict, even the most unruly, may be done to his death save by order of a court or in self-defence. Therefore—"

"But I struck him not!" interrupted the officer, eagerly.

"Do not seek to escape the penalty by lying," cried the young American, fiercely. "Is not that blood a proof? Did not I see the blow, and is there not in the room another witness as well? If I choose

to state the facts, your punishment is assured, as also is the ridicule that will greet the Russian officer who crawled on hands and knees to beg forgiveness of a convict. But I am not hard-hearted, and am willing to make terms. Give me your word of honor that you will make no mention of my knowledge of Russian or of the personal encounter between us, and I, too, will promise to keep silence concerning all that has taken place. My servant also shall remain dumb. Is it agreed?"

"Surely it is agreed," replied the officer, eagerly.

"And you pass your word of honor as a gentleman and a soldier?"

"I pass my word of honor."

"It is well," said Dunster, "and the incident shall go unnoticed. You are free, sir, to proceed with your duty."

As the relieved officer stepped to throw open the door and summon his men, the young American pressed a furtive kiss on the placid brow of the dead, and severed one of the snow-white locks. Then the soldiers bore away the fragile body of his grandfather, found and lost within an hour. As they disappeared, Takahaki, standing stiffly at attention and with one hand raised in salute, broke the silence he had maintained during the whole affair by saying:

"It is the braveness of my friend Dun Brown that I am sarute. Also am I first to sarute my friend, the Count Casimir, of Warsaw. Is it not?"

"Why, yes," replied the other, somewhat doubtfully, "I suppose in a way you are right, Taki. At the same time it isn't worth mentioning, for you know as well as I that it is better to be just a plain, every-day American than to be all the counts in the world. So I guess we won't say anything more about that part of it."

With this momentous incident closed, another phase of Dunster Brownleigh's captivity was ushered in, for, early on the following morning, he was informed that his promised services were needed at the other end of the town, and in company with a guard he was driven to the Vladivostok naval depot. Here he found a confused mass of steel plates and intricate machinery, discharged from the *Cochise*, and awaiting his technical skill to be assembled into the deadly shape of a submarine torpedo-boat.

In order to save the time required to convey the young mechanic to and from his prison-hut, he was assigned quarters at the naval station, and was notified that he might occupy them until the completion of his task, though always under guard. Also, he was allowed to retain the servant through whom the Russians fancied they were gaining so much information concerning him. With the constant presence of this trusted friend thus assured, Dunster tackled his difficult problem with a light heart. He would complete that submarine to the minutest detail, and then he and Taki would use her to make good their escape; when or how he did not know, nor

did he care at present. There were long weeks ahead in which to contrive and plan.

The Vladivostok yard was not equipped with the latest machinery, nor with the most skilled workmen, both of these having been rushed to Port Arthur to keep in repair the fleet of splendid warships there gathered, and at which Admiral Togo was ceaselessly hammering. Among the force remaining at his disposal Dunster soon found that the Chinese were more skilful, more tractable, and quicker to learn than were the Russian workmen. Consequently he used the former whenever it was possible to do so. Thus he gained a double advantage; for, as he could not speak Chinese and so must have an interpreter, he was able to promote his servant to that office. In this way he could have Takahaki's invaluable aid at every stage of the work without exciting suspicion.

In all the time thus spent together the lads strictly maintained their assumed relationship of master and servant. Nor did they find many opportunities for private converse, since an armed guard always paced before Dunster's room at night, while during the day he was never without the companionship of Russian officers desirous of learning what they might concerning the construction of submarines.

The work of assembling the frame and skin of the boat proceeded rapidly, every piece of the cigar-shaped steel structure being marked or numbered and accurately fitted for its appointed place. With

this job finished came the tedious task of setting up the delicate and infinitely complicated machinery that should give life to the inert hull. There was the powerful gasoline-engine that should drive the boat at ten knots on the surface or with the base of the conning-tower awash, and there was the auxiliary electric motor that would propel her at half that speed when submerged. Besides these were air-compressors, fans, air and bilge pumps, batteries, and indicators, all connected by an infinity of pipes and wires as complex and bewildering as the arterial system of a human body. At these things Dunster worked as never before in his life, day after day, and often far into the night through weeks that lengthened into months, and always Takahaki was beside him. The Japanese middy was ever ready with the right tool or the word of advice that should solve an apparently hopeless problem, never attracting attention to himself, but placing at his friend's disposal such an orderly mass of exact mechanical, electrical, and chemical knowledge as showed him to be an absolute master of the situation, and caused even Dunster to regard this unobtrusive helper with admiring wonder.

Summer had passed and autumn was merging into winter before the submarine was pronounced ready for launching and for her trial trip; but as yet the officer selected to command her had not appeared. M. Delar, who often visited the navy-yard, and always with a show of friendship for Dunster, informed him that this person was of

wide experience with submarines, and would be able to detect at a glance any defects or mistakes in the work; but he failed to mention either his name or rank.

In fact, very little information of any kind was allowed to reach our lads, both of whom were strictly confined to the narrow limits within which they lived and labored. They knew that merchant-ships laden with provisions, coal, and military supplies entered and left Vladivostok harbor with a freedom that proved the non-existence of a direct blockade, and from this they argued that the entire naval strength of Japan still was needed in the vicinity of Port Arthur. They only heard faint rumors of the great land battles of Nanshan and Liao-Yang, and even these Russian disasters were reported in Vladivostok as signal victories for the troops of the Czar.

There was, however, one evidence of Russian reverses that could not be concealed even from them, and on it they based their faith in the continued success of the Japanese arms. Late in the summer the Vladivostok cruiser squadron had again gone to sea, only to limp back to port, some ten days later, riddled with shot and minus one of their number. The splendid *Rurik* was missing, and it was rumored that she had been sunk by Admiral Kamimura in the Strait of Korea. Following close upon this news came the startling rumor that the *Novik*, fastest cruiser of the Russian navy, had been destroyed in Aniva Bay, off the coast of Saghalin.

"If that is true, then must Port Arthur be fallen," whispered Takahaki as he served his friend's dinner, "for she was of the fleet in that harbor. If such great thing has happen, then quickly will this port be blockade, and some friend of us will close at hand be."

Sustained by this hope, the young constructors pushed their work with redoubled energy, until at length all was in readiness for the launching. This would take place immediately upon arrival of the boat's commander, who was daily expected. As yet his name had not been divulged, but one day, as Dunster stood inside the conning-tower testing the new adjustable alliscope, that formed an important part of the boat's equipment, a startling apparition was flashed from his reflector. By means of the alliscope, while remaining completely hidden within the boat, he could obtain a very fair view of outside objects in every direction. He was engaged in estimating the radius of sight thus granted, when suddenly a familiar figure walked into the reflected field of vision and halted, apparently pointing directly towards him with out-stretched arm. For a moment the young American was puzzled; then, with a sinking heart, he remembered. The figure, now uniformed as an officer of the Russian navy, was that of Suwarrow Suwarrowvitch, late of L—— University, and the giant tackle of its strongest football team.

CHAPTER XIX

A CAPTAIN TO BE HATED

SUWARROW, having taken a course in mechanics, and having spent some weeks in the American shipyard that had turned out this very boat, was now to be her captain. Thus reasoned Dunster Brownleigh. Of course, it was so, and how stupid he had been not to have considered this probability long ago. Suwarrow, then, was the commander whom, to save his own life, he had sworn to obey. How he hated the thought! The idea of obeying that great, supercilious chump — the "holy terror" who once had been so neatly put out of the game by little Taki! It was disgusting; but, of course, the dose had to be swallowed with such grace as he could muster. And Taki must be warned at once. What a lucky thing that he was on board!

"Oh, Sing-Hi! Topside come, klick, klick!"

In a moment Takahaki, who had been directing the labors of a gang of machinery polishers, stood at the foot of the conning-tower ladder with submissive aspect and attentive ear.

"Taki," said the other, almost whispering, "the Lu-Lu giant is outside and coming to take command. Lie low, and look out he don't discover you."

"That Rus-si-an!" exclaimed Takahaki, though without raising his voice, while his narrow eyes lighted with a great joy. "And no ru-als! Now, Dun Brown, am I most glad."

"Yes, but there are rules. I've sworn to obey the commander of this boat, and if Suwarrow occupies that position, don't you see—"

"Very well do I see many thing, Dun Brown, and most of all am I see that any more we may not know each other. I am servant Sing-Hi, very stupid, not any English speaking; while you are master, very cross, very tired of stupid servant. Oh, it will be fine, this game for beating that Rus-si-an!"

At this point, warned by outside voices close at hand, Takahaki darted back to the engine-room, where, a moment later, further disguised by a broad streak of greasy grime across his face, he was vigorously polishing machinery as though that were the only thing in life worth doing.

At the same time Dunster raised his head above the conning-tower, apparently just then aware of the presence of the visitors who already were climbing aboard. With Suwarrow was Commander Zemaloffsky, and as they gained the deck the former, staring at the young American, asked of the other officer:

"Is this the engineer?"

"Yes. Allow me to present—"

"Never mind an introduction," interrupted Suwarrow. "Already have I met him, and I know

him all that is necessary. Let us proceed at once with our inspection of his work."

Dunster's face was in a blaze, and bitter words leaped to his tongue's end; but, with a prudence that would greatly have surprised his more intimate friends, and by a desperate effort, he choked them back and led the way below in silence.

In the handling-room Suwarrow made a critical examination of everything within sight, and uttered dissatisfied comments in a low tone to his companion; but he only addressed Dunster to ask occasional questions concerning mechanical details. He gave one contemptous glance at the half-dozen of Chinese helpers who were at work on the engine, and then paid no further attention to them. Finally he said, so that all might hear:

"Having been notified that this boat was in complete readiness not only for launching, but for service, I am amazed to discover many defects in her equipment that must be remedied before she will be fit even for a trial. The auxiliary motor, for instance, is so crudely assembled that I doubt if it will run at all. If it should, I will guarantee that it would burn out within five minutes. Therefore, it must be taken down and reinstalled according to plans that I will furnish. I find fault with the placing of the storage batteries, with the arrangement of the air-compressors, and—"

"Excuse me," interrupted Dunster; "but before listening to further criticism of work done in absolute accordance with the builder's plans, I would

like to know by what authority this gentleman speaks?"

"By the authority of the commander whom you are sworn to obey under penalty of being shot as a traitor and a spy," answered Suwarrow, insolently.

Dunster turned an inquiring glance towards M. Zemaloffsky, who said:

"I take pleasure in confirming Lieutenant Suwarrow's statement, and in giving official notification that on account of his especial knowledge of submarine torpedo-boats, acquired in the United States of America, he has been appointed to the command of this one with authority to make any changes in her equipment that his experience may suggest"

"Since we are on this subject," remarked Suwarrow, "I will add, for Mr Brownleigh's benefit, that it is unfortunate both for his reputation as a submarine expert and as a gentleman that the work done by him on honor is so open to criticism."

"Do you mean to insinuate, sir—" began Dunster, furiously

"Nothing," broke in Suwarrow, "except that if your mistakes have been made through ignorance, as I trust is the case, it is a pity that you could not have had the advice of a certain Japanese, recently deceased, who, as I have been told, was your roommate at Annapolis, and who was the best-posted man in the academy on the subject of submarines. Even I obtained several valuable hints from him,

though, of course, at the time he was not conscious of having let them escape him."

"Why do you speak of him as deceased?" demanded Dunster

"Because I had the pleasure of putting a fatal bullet through him during a little naval skirmish at Port Arthur, early in the present war."

"You killed him?"

"Certainly. He was standing on a ledge of rock, and as I fired he fell backward into the sea. '

"I trust you had a legitimate excuse for the act."

"I had the excuse of war, sir, a game that justifies any measure against an enemy. Moreover, he would have attempted to shoot me had not his own pistol been rendered useless by the water from which he had just crawled."

"Then he was helpless, and at your mercy?"

"Oh no," grinned the Russian. "He was provided with a full assortment of jiu-jitsu tricks, which doubtless, he would have used had I given him the chance. But, sir, we will waste no more time in discussing those contemptible Japanese, all of whom will soon be driven into the sea. Therefore, you may at once turn to and put this craft into condition to do well her part in the good work."

"She already is in condition for service, according to the best of my knowledge and ability."

"Then you have much to learn that I shall teach you, and to begin with you may take down that auxiliary preparatory to properly reassembling it."

Having delivered this order, the new commander,

together with his brother-officer, took their departure, leaving behind them a very angry and much-perturbed American. Also they left behind them a young Japanese only just now enlightened as to who had ordered the handful of drenched and exhausted survivors of the shattered torpedo-boat No. 999 to be fired upon after they had surrendered.

That affair took place at early dawn, after the desperate night attack of two Japanese torpedo-boats against the Russian battle-ship *Retvizan*, in Port Arthur harbor. One boat had been sunk with all on board, while the other, vitally wounded, had been driven to the beach, there to be torn to splinters by a tornado of Russian shot. A handful of wretched survivors were discovered by a landing-party sent from one of the Russian ships to examine the wreck. Utterly incapable of defence, the Japanese offered to surrender, but they were laughed to scorn and shot down where they stood. At the first volley their young commander flung himself backward into the sea, preferring to die thus rather than give his hated enemies the satisfaction of killing him.

Encountering a torpedo that had floated from the wreck, he succeeded in so lashing himself to it that he was supported in the water with only his head above the surface. In this way he drifted for hours with the outgoing tide, until finally, exhausted to the point of unconsciousness, he was picked up by one of Admiral Togo's scout-boats. Skilfully nursed back to life, Midshipman Takahaki Matsu,

sole survivor of that desperately brilliant attack, was detached on sick-leave and sent to Japan to recover from his tremendous experience. Thus he was enabled to visit his home in Hakodate, for the first time since leaving it as a school-boy about to try for the glittering prize offered by the Tokio examinations.

It readily can be believed that Takahaki's reception in his native city was the most spontaneous outburst of loving pride ever witnessed in that far northern metropolis. Even while the ovation was in progress and the citizens of Hakodate were showering honors on their hero, he received information that he had been promoted to the command of a submarine torpedo-boat that was on its way across the Pacific from America. A few days later word was flashed to him of the capture of the freighter *Cochise*, having on board that very boat, together with orders to proceed with all haste to the vicinity of Vladivostok, where he would be expected to destroy the stolen craft before it could be made serviceable by the Russians.

All this had been communicated by Takahaki to his friend Dun Brown, a few words at a time, during their infrequent opportunities for private intercourse. Always, the Japanese middy, now masquerading in the humble guise of a servant, regretted his useless proffer of surrender when wrecked in the harbor of Port Arthur.

"For Nippon man to offer that surrender is greatest shame!" he would declare, bitterly. "But

for sake of those poor fellow most nearly drown, without chance to make any fight, I would die before I hold up my hand. And those Rus-si-ans! They make only laugh. Then they shoot and my poor man fall dead, every one. I tell you, Dun Brown, when I am remember those things, I think almost I go crazy with madness; but always I hope that sometime I will know that officer who order shoot and same minute fire pistol at me. If I know his name, then may I find him, and never any more will he order shoot surrendered man."

Whenever he spoke of that tragic incident Takahaki's eyes would narrow to merest slits, and his face would blacken with rage. Therefore, on the evening after Suwarrow had declared his connection with that Port Arthur affair, Dunster Brownleigh awaited with some anxiety the appearance of Sing-Hi, who was due with his supper. He expected a violent outburst; but when his friend entered the room it was with a countenance of such smiling tranquillity as aroused his curiosity.

"You seem pleased as pie, Taki. What has gone good with you?" he asked.

"Yes, Dun Brown, I now am very happy. I am know that man. Pretty quick we will go down together in that submarine. If he has fix it the way I tell him long time ago, then never any more will it come up. It will not be happy for him how he will die, but for me will it be very pleasant."

"And how about me?" asked Dunster, dryly.

"You, Dun Brown? You will not be there. Oh no! Never must you go down in that submarine at the same time with that Lu-Lu man."

"But that is just what I mean to do, Taki."

CHAPTER XX

THE NEW COMMANDER

The internal mechanism of a submarine boat is about as delicate as that of a watch, and infinitely more complicated. Also, as the submarine is a very new thing, still in process of development, its machinery is constantly changing and becoming more intricate with the rapid invention of methods and appliances. Consequently, the submarine expert must devote his entire attention to his specialty and keep in touch with the latest introductions, or speedily become a back number. This fate had befallen Lieutenant Suwarrow, now commanding the *Apostoloff*, as our submarine had been named by her new owners, after a noted Russian experimenter with this type of craft. To begin with, Suwarrow had gained but a superficial knowledge of submarines while in America, and, having had nothing to do with them since that time, he now was ignorant of several important recently perfected devices in use on the *Apostoloff*. He was further hampered by the misinformation so cunningly imparted to him by Takahaki when they worked together in the American ship-yard.

As a consequence of all this, Suwarrow found

many things on board not to his liking, and which he ordered changed. Having sworn to obey the commander of the submarine, Dunster Brownleigh made these changes as directed, though realizing that they would seriously interfere with operating the boat, if they did not render her helpless and useless. He did utter one protest against a change that would destroy the efficiency of the auxiliary motor, but he was so rudely snubbed for daring to question the methods of his commander that thereafter he held his peace.

When everything finally was arranged to Suwarrow's satisfaction, and he pronounced the boat ready for launching, ice was forming so rapidly in the harbor that the trial trip must be taken at once or indefinitely postponed. Even now a channel to the sea was only kept open by the ceaseless efforts of a massive ice-breaker, with the hope that several belated coal-laden steamers, known to be on their way to Vladivostok, still might arrive.

So the *Apostoloff* was launched with full service equipment, including crew, stores, water, torpedoes, high explosives, and gasoline, on board. The crew consisted of six men: one American, acting as chief-engineer, and in honor bound to obey the orders of her commander; two Russians, Suwarrow, and another who ranked as assistant-engineer and was in training for the position of chief; and three Chinese, one of whom had shown such skill as to be made electrician.

The launching took place in presence of a notable

gathering of Russian officials; a priest in gorgeous robes blessed and christened the little craft as she slid easily off the greased ways, and a roar of artillery greeted her entrance into the water. She was launched with conning-tower hatch tightly closed for fear lest she might sink at the outset; but her buoyancy proved sufficient to lift her deck a foot above the surface, and Suwarrow, noting this, flung back the hinged steel cover, above which he waved his cap triumphantly to the anxious watchers. Then he gave the order for full speed ahead, and the *Apostoloff*, looking more like a frisking porpoise than a war-ship, started down the ice-bordered channel. After going about a verst (two-thirds of a mile), she retraced her course to the point of departure and was received with acclamations by the delighted spectators. The next test was that of diving to the bottom, discharging a dummy torpedo, and again rising to the surface, all of which was successfully accomplished. Then her exultant commander announced that he would run some five versts down the channel with deck awash, dive, and bring his boat back under water, and, as this was the most important test of all, it was awaited with breath ess interest.

So the little craft sped away, sinking lower and lower as she went, until only her tiny Russian naval flag, fluttering from a slender, steel staff, was visible. In another moment this, too, disappeared; but the spectators could not tell whether it had been swallowed by distance or had sunk beneath the surface.

A swift torpedo-boat had accompanied the *Apostoloff* on her first trip and was to have kept pace with her on this one so long as she remained on the surface, to render assistance if anything went wrong; but it had been detained at the last moment by the non-arrival of a case of champagne with which its officers proposed to celebrate the success of the submarine's initial trip. Thus the latter was lost to view before her convoy was ready to dart in pursuit. Half an hour later the torpedo-boat returned alone and at reduced speed, while her crew anxiously scanned the water on all sides. As she neared the docks eager inquiries were exchanged between the spectators there gathered and her officers.

"Where is the submarine? Has anything happened to her?"

Nobody knew. The torpedo-boat had not seen her nor learned anything concerning her movements. She had not returned to the point of departure. Nothing further was known.

Although darkness was gathering, the torpedo-boat again dashed down the channel and back, exploring every inch of the dark waters with her powerful searchlight, but without result. Now it was deemed certain that mishap of some kind had overtaken the submarine. All night long tugs kept the channel free from ice and dragged grapnels along its bottom, but the *Apostoloff* was not located.

On the following day the channel was patrolled as far as the open sea, and late in the afternoon, or

twenty-four hours after the submarine had disappeared, three floating bodies, promptly identified as members of the missing crew, were discovered by a returning tug drifting in the channel and taken back to the city. What had happened to them and to the boat with which they had gone down was not learned for many months, and when the story was told in Vladivostok its dwellers had far more important matters to claim their attention.

In the mean time, the *Apostoloff* had so successfully completed the first half of her trial trip that Suwarrow was filled with exultation.

"That she runs so smoothly is a complete vindication of my methods over yours," he remarked to his chief-engineer, "and it is good that I arrived on the scene before you had the opportunity for doing mischief."

Dunster made no answer, but devoted himself to his machinery.

"Did you hear me?" shouted the commander.

"Yes, sir."

"Why, then, did not you answer?"

"I didn't know any answer was required."

"Well, it was. And I'll have you to understand that when I honor a subordinate, especially one in your position, by speaking to him, he will promptly appreciate the compliment or suffer the consequences."

"Very good, sir," muttered Dunster, at the same time biting his under lip until it bled.

A few minutes later the order to submerge was

given, and the conning-tower hatch was closed. Sea-water was admitted to the ballast-tanks, the engine was stopped, and its supply of gasoline was cut off. Directly afterwards the boat began to sink, with Suwarrow noting the depth indicator and all hands standing by in readiness for the next move. At a depth of twenty feet the commander, with hand on steering-lever and eyes fixed on a compass-card, gave orders to close sea-cocks and start up the electric auxiliary.

Takahaki, still in Chinese disguise and acting as electrician, turned on the switch. There was a fizz, a sputter, a shower of sparks, a cloud of stifling smoke, and a horrible odor of burning rubber—imperfect insulation and a motor hopelessly burned out.

As Suwarrow realized what had happened, his face blazed with anger, and, springing at the unsuspecting electrician, he felled him with a cruel blow. At the same moment he raised his foot to kick the prostrate form; but, ere he could accomplish his purpose, Dunster Brownleigh and another were upon him and he was borne to the iron floor. Instantly the second Russian leaped into the fray, drawing his pistol as he did so and firing a shot that sounded in that confined space with the stunning roar of a thunderbolt. The shot was echoed by a scream, and the mêlée became so general that for a few moments the entire crew formed a madly struggling heap of humanity, gasping, choking, and fighting tooth and nail. Finally the writhing mass

was separated into its component parts. Three men stood up and three lay starkly motionless, their blood-streaked faces showing ominously white in the electric glare from overhead. One of these was Suwarrow, and another face also was Russian, while the third was of darker complexion. It belonged to one of the engine-room crew, and he had been shot through the head. The three who stood up were Dunster Brownleigh, Takahaki, and the remaining Chinese, bruised and battered almost beyond recognition, but alive and with unbroken bones.

"Jiu-jitsu pulled me through," remarked Dunster, grimly, as soon as he could control his breath. "How was it with you, Taki?"

"I think same way, Dun Brown," replied the young Japanese, with a smile that was rendered ghastly by a cut extending from a corner of his mouth nearly across his left cheek. "Perhaps that Rus-si-an now will remember that ballfoot game."

"I doubt if he remembers anything or ever will again, for I believe you have killed him."

"Maybe so," answered Takahaki, indifferently. "And maybe that other Rossky, too. Anyway, I am hope so, for it is trouble to kill same man two time, and he has kill my friend."

"What do you mean?" asked Dunster, at the same time glancing with partial comprehension at the body of the dead Chinese lying out-stretched on the floor.

"Yes, him Nippon man," said Takahaki, noting

the glance. "Same also that one." Here he pointed to the other Chinese who was bending over the body of his countryman.

"Do you mean that they are Japanese?"

"Yes, Nippon Denji."

"Great Scot! No wonder they made good mechanics. But look out, Taki! That chap isn't dead yet."

Suwarrow, merely stunned, had recovered consciousness, and was in the act of drawing a revolver when Dunster's eye caught the motion.

"Then will I quick make him dead!" cried Takahaki, savagely, at the same time springing towards the prostrate form.

"Hold on, Taki!" exclaimed the other, seizing his friend's arm. "We mustn't commit murder in cold blood. Tie him, if you like, but don't kill him. I won't have it."

For a moment Takahaki hesitated and looked ugly. Then he yielded. Both Suwarrow and the other Russian, who also was found to be alive, were securely bound, and the victors in that under-water battle found opportunity for considering their situation.

"We must rise to the surface and blow out," said Dunster, "for this air is too horrible."

At this moment came a voice from the floor, and, to the amazement of our friends, Suwarrow interrupted their planning.

"Mr. Brownleigh," he said, and his words, though weakly spoken, were readily heard. "You have

sworn on your honor to obey the commander of this craft. I think it is not disputed that I am her commander. Therefore I order you to cut loose these bonds. Also you will immediately place those two Chinamen under arrest."

The young American hesitated. It was true that he had pledged his honor to obey this man, but, if he should do as he was now bidden, what would be the consequences? Certainly his friend's life would be forfeited, and perhaps others as well. What was his duty?

While Dunster was attempting to solve this problem, Takahaki had slipped from the handling-room and gone forward to a place in which he had secreted a bundle some days before.

Suddenly those who remained were confronted by the apparition of a Japanese naval officer in full uniform, including white gloves, who faced them in the glare of the electric lights.

"Taki!" gasped Dunster Brownleigh. "You?"

"Lieutenant Matsu, if you will please," replied the other, formally, "now in command of this ship, *Naisha* (the Secret), property of the Mikado of Japan. These man is prisoner of war. This submarine is of Nippon navy. You make swear to obey her commander. So you will, if you please, obey me. My number one order is not touch those man. Number two order, rise ship to top of water. Is it good order?"

"They are good orders, sir," was the prompt reply of Chief-engineer Brownleigh, as, with mind relieved

of a great burden, he saluted the new commander of the submarine. Then he began to obey "good order" number two by emptying the ballast-tanks of their sea-water, through powerful pumps driven by compressed air, and directly the depth indicator showed the boat to be rising.

A few minutes later she struck against something solid with such force that those of her crew who were standing were flung to the floor. After that she remained motionless, and, though there was no sound of lapping waves, the indicator showed her to have reached the surface.

CHAPTER XXI

UNDER THE HARBOR ICE

As Dunster Brownleigh and the new commander of the *Naisha* regained their feet, they confronted each other with anxious faces.

"We have reached the surface," said the former, with a glance at the depth indicator.

"Yes."

At the moment of speaking, Takahaki sprang up the conning-tower ladder and attempted to raise the hatch, but it was immovable.

"Dun Brown," he said, "we are under the ice!"

"I know it," replied the other, "and the worst of it is that we haven't an idea to which side of the channel we have drifted. Nor do we know how far we are from it. There may be open water within a few yards of us, or it may be a mile away. Even if our auxiliary were in shape so that we could go ahead, which it isn't, we wouldn't know in which direction to steer, nor can we learn without an observation. Of course we could use the gasoline on compressed air for a few miles, but our air is too precious to be wasted on uncertainties."

"So that observation we may not take," mused Takahaki.

"It doesn't look like it; but I'll tell you what we can do. We can make ready to take an observation, if we have the chance, by putting our electric auxiliary into working order. It's one bit of luck that we've enough insulated wire on board to rewind it. What do you say, Mr. Commander—shall we tackle the job?"

"Yes, Dun Brown, we will rewind, for it can do no harm to work, but perhaps good, and it will keep us from always thinking," replied Takahaki, promptly, at the same time starting forward to get the coil of wire from its place of storage.

In spite of his brave words, it was evident from the young commander's furrowed brow and long periods of silence as he worked that he was thinking, and thinking profoundly, of the desperate plight into which his little craft had fallen. Besides being imprisoned beneath unyielding ice, and without sense of the direction in which lay safety, the limited interior space at his disposal was encumbered by one dead man and by two living enemies who must constantly be watched to see that they did not loosen their bonds and seek an opportunity for murdering their captors.

There was plenty to do besides rewinding the motor. Suwarrow's errors had to be corrected, while exhausted nature demanded a certain amount of food and sleep. Thus many hours were passed before the work in hand was so far completed that if they had known in which direction to go they could have navigated their craft without wasting

precious air. But the outside blackness remained impenetrable, and they had no guide.

"Look here, Taki," said Dunster, finally, "we can't be more than half a mile from that blessed channel, and I propose that we run half-mile traverses, north, east, south, and west, or until we find it, keeping as close to the surface as we dare, and coming back as nearly as possible to this point each time."

As no better plan suggested itself, this one was adopted, and the *Naisha* began to make her way blindly through the darkness, submerged to a one-fathom depth and impelled by her reconstructed auxiliary. Her commander had doffed his uniform and returned to the post of electrician; while Dunster, in the conning-tower, steered, and stared at the thick dead-eyes to detect the faintest glimmer of light that should denote open water above them. The third member of the crew watched the prisoners, as well as the dials indicating speed and depth.

So they went one-half mile north and back, one-half mile east and back, one-half mile south and back, and one-half mile west and back, without a single gleam to indicate that their movements had led them to open water. While they were on their last course the sharp tinkle of the bell connected with their sounding apparatus suddenly warned them of water so shoal that they were in imminent danger of being wedged between ice and bottom. As with reversed motor the *Naisha* hurriedly backed

away from this danger, Dunster conceived an idea for obtaining access to the air.

"Hold on, Taki!" he cried. "Stop her for a moment while we consider a scheme. Can't we manage to place a mine so as to blow a hole through that confounded ice? A few pounds of gun-cotton would do the trick, if we could get it into position."

"But how could we get it into that position?" asked the young commander.

"A can, half filled with explosive and provided with a time fuse, might be ejected from the torpedo tube and allowed to float up to the point of contact."

Takahaki shook his head. "It is of too much danger in water so little," he said. "Also we have no time fuse, but only the electric, and now not the wire to get away far enough. No, Dun Brown, such plan may not do; but maybe another thing may do in deep water when we get back to that place from which we make start. So, if you please, we will again head to the east and at one-half mile we will go to the bottom. Then, if the water is enough deep, perhaps we will blow the ice."

"All right, Taki, you are the boss," muttered Dunster. "Only if we haven't wire enough for safety in one place, I don't see how we are going to be any better off in another."

While Dunster grumbled like a true sailor, he also obeyed orders like one, and in a few minutes the *Naisha* was as nearly as might be in the position she had occupied when her crew made the startling discovery that they were imprisoned beneath thick

ice. Here she was stopped and sunk to the bottom at an indicated depth of thirty feet.

"Now, Dun Brown," said Takahaki, who had carefully thought out his plan, "we will screw detonator to torpedo, insert in tube, pump out forward tanks till bow elevates ten degrees, and discharge. Total distance to point of contact about fifty-eight yards. Concussion very great, but margin of safety is, I think, sufficient. After explosion we follow course of torpedo and come to hole in ice, open water, and fresh air in plenty. There we take observation and lay course for channel. Is it good?"

"It is a fine scheme, Taki, and shows you to have a great head. I suppose responsibility develops heads, and if I were commander in your place I might have worked out that proposition myself, perhaps. The only thing I have against you is that you didn't think of it hours ago, so that we might have been breathing instead of simply stifling all this time."

"Dun Brown, but for you speak of mine I might never think of such plan. Even now that concussion may break this boat. I am not know; but can hope not, for she is so strong as to resist sea pressure at fifty fathom. I think sure, though, it will give us great headache."

"I don't believe it can give me a greater one than I already have," replied Dunster, with an attempt at a smile; "but if it don't give us something to breathe besides this poison, then I hope it will

smash us to bits and have done; for I don't care to try and live without air any longer."

By strenuous effort one of the five torpedoes forming the submarine's offensive weapons was made ready for service and inserted in the tube. Then the breech-block was closed and locked, sea-water was admitted, and the bow port was opened. A forward trimming-tank was blown empty, and the boat's nose gradually lifted to the required angle. The young commander turned on a quick rush of compressed air; there was a cough, a thud, an intake of water, and the deadly engine of destruction, containing enough gun-cotton to put a battle-ship out of business, had been started on its upward, slanting course.

A submarine does not hurl its terrible weapon at the foe, but merely starts it, and a little motor, working inside the torpedo itself, speeds the whole affair, without deflection from a given course, to a distance of something over a mile. Then, if no obstacle has been encountered, the torpedo stops and rises to the surface, where it floats ready to be picked up and given another chance at destruction.

In the present case the crew of the *Naisha* knew just how far their torpedo must travel before striking the overhead ice, just how many seconds would be occupied in covering the distance, and that a tremendous explosion was certain to occur at the instant of contact. What they did not know was the possible effect of the explosion, under existing conditions, upon their boat and themselves. There-

fore, as the torpedo was ejected, all three threw themselves flat on the floor and waited, in breathless suspense, for the expected shock.

Dunster Brownleigh found himself trying to dig his fingers into the iron plates beneath him, and was absolutely unconscious of the passage of time, when, it might have been a second, a minute, or an hour later, he heard Takahaki's voice and glanced up. The young commander was standing erect, and was saying:

"That time limit is passed by many seconds, and there has been no explosion. Let us, then, follow that torpedo and see what has happened."

Heaving great sighs of relief at the passing of their threatened peril, and filled with curiosity as to what could have averted the explosion, the *Naisha's* crew sprang to their appointed posts, and in another minute their boat was following the course of the torpedo. As before, Dunster stood in the conning-tower striving to pierce the outer blackness. Suddenly it seemed to him that a film of light was paling the glass at which he stared. He rubbed his eyes and looked again. Yes, it was the blessed daylight, that he had almost despaired of ever again seeing, dimly filtering through the thick glass, but growing brighter with each instant.

The lad's voice choked as he tried to shout the glad news to those below, and before he could control it they had stopped the motor; for the closely watched depth indicator showed them to be within a few feet of the surface.

Takahaki squeezed up beside his friend, and together they looked out over a leaden sea of tossing water dotted with jagged cakes of floating ice that bumped viciously against the *Naisha's* rounded deck.

"I don't understand why we didn't feel or hear that explosion," said Dunster. "It must have been tremendous to have shattered such a body of ice. There seems to be no end to the opening."

"That end is far away," replied the other, quietly; "for this is the channel, that we must have been close beside many time, and two time at least must have passed under."

"Oh, Taki, kick me, or knock me in the head, or set me ashore, or do something with me, for I am too stupid to live! It must be the effect of this vile air. Let's get the hatch open and feel how it seems to be alive and breathing once more."

"Yes, and for that observation," agreed the Japanese.

So they tried to uplift the steel cover above their heads, but could not. That first crashing contact with the ice had jammed it fast; but an air-pipe leading to the engine-room proved to be in working order, and through it the exhausted crew inhaled long draughts of the vital element from which they so nearly had been cut off.

Although they could not get outside for an observation, they found their alliscope to be uninjured; and by uplifting its telescopic length, Dunster, who alone of the crew was familiar with its

use, obtained a fairly far-reaching view of their surroundings. He could see that they were in the channel kept open by ice-breakers, that sky and water alike were of a dull gray, and then suddenly there came within his range of vision a trail of smoke moving directly towards them. When this fact was reported to the young commander, the latter promptly took measures for again disappearing beneath the waves, with only the slender shaft of his alliscope reaching to the surface.

"It is very good," said Takahaki, when this had been done; "and now will we get rid of that Suwarrow without killing him."

"But how?" asked Dunster. "With the hatch-cover hopelessly jammed, I don't see how you are going to get him out."

"Dun Brown, maybe we can make of that Russi-an a torpedo," was the answer.

CHAPTER XXII

TORPEDOES OF SEVERAL KINDS

For a moment Dunster looked dubiously into Takahaki's smiling face.

"Make a torpedo of a Russian?" he repeated, slowly, as though striving to grasp the other's meaning. "You don't mean to eject him through the tube?"

"Hei. That is what I mean."

"But he will drown as soon as we open the port."

"Maybe so, but I think maybe perhaps not. Anyhow, it must be tried. There is no other way, and for our own safety we may not longer keep him on board."

Takahaki was commander of the submarine, and Dunster was sworn to obey his orders; so, though with great reluctance, he helped thrust the unresisting Suwarrow into the torpedo-tube. As the inert form was slid into the narrow chamber its bonds were severed. Then the breech was closed, the bow port was opened, and almost at the same instant an irresistible blast of compressed air emptied the tube.

"Close port! Clear tube! Make ready for number two shot!" commanded Takahaki, crisply; and

a few minutes later a second victim was enclosed within the steel cylinder.

He, too, was ejected, and then came the turn of the Japanese who, in that place, had died that his country might live. As the rigid body took its turn to enter the chamber from which its living predecessors had passed to an unknown fate, Takahaki bent low over it and muttered a few words of commendation in his own tongue. Then the now familiar orders were again given, and the submarine was emptied of its dead as well as of those who had so imperilled the safety of its remaining living.

A minute later, a quick glance through the alliscope having shown that the approaching steamer, which proved to be a tug bound up the channel, was close at hand, the auxiliary motor was started, the horizontal rudder was slightly deflected, and the last visible vestige of the submarine disappeared from view beneath the leaden sea.

Takahaki kept his boat below as long as her nearly exhausted air supply would allow, and then cautiously regained the surface. Within the limited range of the alliscope no tug was visible, and with deck awash the *Naisha* was headed down channel for the open sea. With an hour's run, and as the short Northern day was drawing to its close, she gained a sheltered position in the lee of a low-lying rock off the harbor entrance and beyond the ice, where it was decided to spend the night.

In the mean time, the conning-tower hatch had been pried open, and the long-imprisoned crew once

more breathed unlimited quantities of untainted air. Having anchored his little ship and retreated before the bitter cold to its snug interior, the young commander's first move was to rip a hole in the lining of his uniform coat and draw forth a diminutive Japanese naval flag. At sight of it his fellow-countryman dropped to his knees and repeatedly touched his head to the floor with audible inhalings of breath. Then he was permitted to hold aloft the treasure, while Takahaki in turn prostrated himself before the flag of his adored Mikado. Dunster did not bow down to it, because it was not his flag, and because that was not the American way of showing respect. Besides, he was too importantly busy just then with a kettle of water that he was trying to boil over a little electric stove. At the same time he was so filled with joy at finding himself enlisted under the sun-rayed banner of Russia's chiefest enemy that he shouted, "Nippon Banzai! Banzai! Banzai!" (Ten thousand years of life to Japan), a compliment that was acknowledged by his companions with pleased smiles and profound bows.

There was not much conversation until they had satisfied their hunger and warmed their chilled blood with copious draughts of hot tea, but after that came a council of war. Dunster, comfortably outstretched on the smooth steel back of one of the remaining automobile torpedoes, opened the conversation by remarking: "Well, captain, here we are! What happens next?"

Takahaki sat awkwardly on another torpedo made fast to the opposite side of the boat, while the third member of the crew squatted on the floor at a respectful distance but within easy hearing of all that was said.

"Dun Brown, I may not say what thing is next come, till I get the bearings of the mind," replied Takahaki.

"Good enough! Mental bearings are exactly what we need. To begin with, then, we have got safely away from the 'Rosskys,' as you call them, though they may be prowling somewhere around here looking for us at this very moment, for all we know."

"Ah, that Rus-si-an!" interrupted Takahaki, in a tone of intense satisfaction.

"Yes, it isn't likely that friend Suwarrow will bother us any more; but there are others who are liable to jump on us just so long as we remain in this vicinity."

"Then must we quick get away," agreed Takahaki.

"So I think; but where to is the question. How far is it to Tsushima?"

"Seven hundred and fifty mile," was the ready answer.

"Too far for us, though our normal radius is eight hundred. We are too short-handed, though, for so long a run, and we have on board only about one-half our full supply of gasoline. What comes next? Oh, Hakodate, of course; but if I remem-

ber rightly that is some five hundred miles from here."

"Four hundred ninety-two," corrected Takahaki.

"Still too far for us, even though you should knock off those last two miles. What other place is there?"

"Perhaps Wonsan," suggested the young commander.

"Of course — Japanese colony on the east coast of Korea. How far is Wonsan?"

"Three fifty about."

"Thirty-six hours' run under normal conditions, forty-eight or more in heavy weather, and eternity for us if anything goes wrong, as it is pretty certain to do with our Suwarrowized equipment. Can't you think of some nearer place or of something more hopeful?"

"No, Dun Brown, unless it is that we might meet some war-ship of my country."

"That would help us out of a pretty nasty fix, I'll admit; but I don't believe there is the slightest chance of any such luck."

"Then, Dun Brown, we will at the first of daylight start for Wonsan," replied the young commander, with a tone of decision.

"Very good, sir," answered Dunster. "I am glad to have the question settled. At the same time I must confess that I consider the chance of this craft, unprovided with charts—thanks to the late lamented Suwarrow—short-handed, and on half-supply of fuel, thanks to the same gentleman, mak-

ing a winter voyage of nearly four hundred miles and gaining an unknown port, to be about as slim as though it did not exist at all."

"Yes, very slim chance; but perhaps better than if we return to Vladivostok."

"A thousand times better!" cried Dunster, energetically. "And now, sir, since we are to start at daybreak, with your permission I will turn in."

"Yes," agreed the young commander, "it is good if all of us turn in this night, for on some other night it may not be so possible."

Thus it happened that, a few minutes later, the entire crew of the *Naisha*, out-stretched on whatever of clothing or oil-skins or waste they had been able to place between their bodies and the unyielding iron of the floor, were buried in the utter oblivion of dreamless sleep. As they slept, almost without moving, their uncanny craft, the only one of its kind in Eastern seas, tugged at its cable, wallowed beneath the rush of overflowing waves, or slid down the smooth slopes of long rollers that every now and then found their way behind the sheltering rocks.

So the hours wore on until, towards morning, a great ship, black and deep-laden, showing no lights, a formless smudge in a void of darkness, came up from the southward, cautiously feeling her way through the night. At length she was on soundings; and, as they gradually shoaled, her speed lessened until, in ten fathoms, her engines were stopped. By this time daylight was close at hand,

and until then it was safer to wait. So the ponderous anchor was let go with a rush and a roar of chain. As it struck the water there came a blinding flash of light and an explosion as terrific as the crash of a thunderbolt.

The ship quivered in every joint, groaned as though in mortal pain, and rolled rails under, while yells of terror sounded from deck and hold. A few minutes later rockets began to leap hissing through the upper darkness, spreading far and wide their messages of distress, while the whole fabric glowed with electric lights.

On the *Naisha*, miles away, the effect of the shock was such that her crew instantly were wide awake and asking one another what had happened.

"It was a heavy report of some kind," said Dunster, "for the jar made my teeth rattle; but I've no idea whether it came from land or sea. What time is it, anyway?" Here the speaker switched on an electric light and glanced at the ship's clock, that marked the hour of seven.

"Most near day!" exclaimed Takahaki; "but out light quick, till we something know!"

Thus saying, the young commander entered the conning-tower and opened the hatch, that had been closed against the egress of breaking seas. For a minute he saw nothing. Then, in the distance, against the paling eastern sky, a rocket soared aloft and burst into a fiery shower.

"Ship in trouble!" he reported, as, withdrawing his head, he again closed the hatch against the bitter

cold. "Rockets out at sea. With daylight we will go and find the matter. Without light we may not get away from these rocks; but in a half-hour we can plenty see."

"Just time enough to make coffee," said Dunster, who was a firm believer in being well fortified with food and drink before seeking trouble.

"Or perhaps tea," suggested Takahaki.

"Oh yes. Of course. I might have remembered that there isn't such a thing as a cup of coffee in this whole benighted region; but I do so hate tea. The stuff is only an excuse for drinking hot water, anyway."

So Dunster grumbled while he attended to the kettle and the others examined the *Naisha's* engines to see that everything was in working order.

An hour later the submarine, showing only her conning-tower and a tiny Japanese naval flag fluttering bravely just above the sullen waters, had left her rock-screened shelter and was headed towards an anchored steamer that had been discovered by the growing daylight.

CHAPTER XXIII

A MONSTER OF THE DEEP

THERE was no chance for conversation as the *Naisha* sped on her voyage of discovery, that would mean so much, one way or another, to our lads, for each member of her crew was too intent upon the manifold duties allotted to him; but each was in a fever of excitement. If the steamer should prove Japanese, all would be well; if Russian, it would be their duty to try and destroy her; while if she were a neutral their course must be governed by circumstances. As they approached near enough for observations, Dunster, who steered from the conning-tower, shouted down brief reports to his companions.

"Merchant-ship!" he called; and a little later, "At anchor, and seems down by the head!" In another minute he announced, "I can see her ensign, and it is British!"

At this report, Takahaki stopped his engine and the *Naisha* floated motionless, wellnigh invisible and not yet detected from the ship. The wind of the night had subsided and was succeeded by a calm, beneath which the sea heaved in long, oily swells.

"Yes," said the young commander, after a long

look at the anchored steamer, "she is a neutral, and so perhaps of no use to us. But maybe," he added, brightening, "she has something contraband on board for which we may capture her."

"Capture her?" repeated Dunster, incredulously. "Three of us capture a ship of that size? Why, she must have forty or fifty men on board."

"Perhaps yes; but same time I think it will be a very easy thing. Now let us go a little more under the water and move slowly around her for see what has happen."

So the *Naisha* sank from sight, leaving only the cowl of her alliscope above the surface, and in this condition she circumnavigated the anchored ship, within observing distance, without being detected.

"There is a hole in her starboard bow," announced Dunster, who, as usual, handled the alliscope. "It looks as though she had been in collision, and yet it doesn't; for, while the hole is just above the water-line, it doesn't extend far enough up to have been caused by another ship, nor is it of the right shape. If it were lower down I should say that it had been caused by contact with a floating mine. That would account for the explosion we heard, too; but surely even Russians couldn't be such fools as to set mines adrift in track of the coal-laden ships they are so anxiously expecting."

"Perhaps maybe it was our torpedo," suggested Takahaki, quietly.

"By Jove, old man, that's the very thing!" cried Dunster. "What a chucklehead I am, not to have

thought of it! The tide was running out, and easily might have drifted it as far as this. Of course, it was our torpedo, and it's lucky for them that they struck it on the surface instead of having it strike them a fathom or so lower down."

"Perhaps for us, too," said the other. "But tell me, Dun Brown, are they mending that hole?"

"Trying to," was the answer. "They've launched a staging over the side and there's a gang at work on it."

"Then will we give them a little amazement," announced the *Naisha's* commander.

The British ship *Honan*, coal-laden from Cardiff, had been in hard luck from the very beginning of her voyage. Storms, breakdowns of her machinery, and sickness among her crew had attended her all the way to Shanghai, her original port of consignment. There she lay for two months in muddy Woo-Sung Creek before receiving rush orders, by cipher cable, to proceed to Vladivostok. In the mean time, her crew had died or deserted until her captain and the chief-engineer, an American named Bunker, were the only "Europeans"* left on board. To obey orders the former was obliged to ship a job-lot of Lascars and Chinese. Then he cleared for Che-Foo and put to sea, with winter already upon him, for a run to the northward so hazardous that only a handsome bonus promised by his owners to be paid even if he failed to reach Vladivostok, and

*In Asia all white persons are called Europeans.

doubled if he got there safely with his precious cargo, nerved him to undertake it.

Once clear of the coast, Captain Crosscut made no pretence of steering towards Che-Foo, but bore directly away for the Strait of Korea, which the Japanese were blockading, and in which they already had captured many valuable prizes. Aided by a dense fog, during which she was ordered to halt by one shot fired across her bow from an unseen blockader, and had three men killed by another that raked her deck, the *Honan* made good her entrance into the Japan Sea. There, again in a fog, she struck on the Liancourt Rocks, from which she escaped only by sacrificing a portion of her cargo and aided by an extra high tide. Then her crew mutinied, and if Captain Crosscut had not ostentatiously thrown overboard every firearm that the ship contained excepting two pairs of revolvers worn by himself and his engineer, the sorrowful voyage would have ended then and there. As it was, the mutiny was quelled, the cowed Lascars returned half-heartedly to their work, and the *Honan*, showing no lights at night, crept a couple of hundred miles farther northward.

As she neared her destination her exhausted officers, cheered by visions of wealth almost within reach, congratulated one another that their ill-omened undertaking was about to terminate successfully, after all. Gaining soundings on what they fondly hoped was the last night of the voyage, they determined to avoid further risks by anchoring

where they were until daylight, and the engines were stopped. Five minutes later the letting go of a ponderous anchor was instantly followed by an explosion so tremendous that, for a short space, every soul on board imagined their ship to be totally wrecked, and a mad rush was made for the boats. Several of these were launched, and three-fourths of the crew, tumbling into them, pulled to a safe distance, where they lay to and awaited developments.

Those who remained on board set off rockets with the hope of attracting assistance, while the chief-engineer made a hurried examination into the condition of the ship. A little later he reported:

"Number one forward compartment is full of water, sir, but the bulkhead still holds and there is no present danger of sinking."

"Very good, Mr. Bunker," replied the captain; "you may let go another anchor and we will wait till daylight before deciding what is best to be done. For Heaven's sake, though, slack away gently on your cable, for anchoring in these waters seems to be about the most dangerous thing a man can do."

"What do you suppose it was, cap?" asked the engineer after the second anchor had been got overboard without mishap.

"Must have been a floating mine, though I can't understand why the confounded Russians should place any without notifying us, when they are offering every inducement for coal-ships to run the blockade."

"Perhaps it was the work of Japs."

"Nonsense! There aren't any Japs in this vicinity yet. They've got all they can attend to at Port Arthur."

"Maybe so; but you never can tell what Japs are going to do or where they are going to turn up. I myself didn't think much of 'em until their war with China. Then I served on the Chinese battleship *Ting-Yuen* in the Yalu fight, where a little Jap cruiser had us knocked out in such short order that I've felt ever since there's nothing too big or too desperate for those fellows to tackle."

By this time the occupants of the boats, nearly perished by the cold of the night, and seeing that the ship was not sinking, returned to her and sheepishly climbed on board. By daylight the extent of the damage, caused by the still mysterious explosion, being found much less than had been feared, Captain Crosscut decided that, with a temporary patch over the hole, he still might limp into Vladivostok; and he soon had a gang of men at work from a staging launched over the side. Leaning far over the forecastle rail, he personally superintended the job, upon which the attention of every person on board was focussed.

Of a sudden the captain found himself gazing in fascinated horror at a vague black form, unlike anything he had ever run across in all his seafaring experience. It was silently and slowly rising from the ocean depths not fifty feet away, and at first sight he thought it was a whale. In another moment, however, as it lay with a small portion of its

glistening iron back exposed, he knew that the mysterious object was of human origin.

In the mean time, the workers on the staging, catching sight of the silent monster, were swarming up the tackle-ropes to the deck with yells of terror. Shooting out a long, jointed arm or feeler, the creature seemed to reach after them, at the same time glaring balefully in their direction from a single, unwinking eye set at the end of the tentacle. All at once, as suddenly as it had shot up, this uncanny member was withdrawn. At the same moment the terrifying form sank beneath the waves and disappeared without rippling the surface or giving other evidence of life.

Although it was a cold day, Captain Crosscut lifted his cap and mechanically wiped away the beads of sweat that glistened on his forehead.

"I never in my life saw a submarine," he said to the engineer, who stood beside him, staring at the water where the monster had floated, "but I've read of 'em, and I'll be hanged if I don't think that was one."

"Then it must belong to the Japs, 'cause if it was Russian it would at least have hailed us. Now, I suppose, having taken an observation, they have gone below to finish blowing us up."

"Man, dear, don't say that!" ejaculated the captain. "Why should they blow us up, when we'd surrender in a minute if they'd give us the chance? Here you!" he cried to a Chinese quartermaster, "scuttle aft and haul down that ensign. Bend on

a Jap flag above it and hoist 'em both together. Sabe?"

"Yep, me sabe," responded the man as he made a dive for the flag-locker.

The remainder of the crew huddled together, excitedly jabbering in half a dozen dialects, with straining eyes fixed on the place where the terror had disappeared. Nothing could have induced them to resume work on the staging within reach of that awful tentacle; nor did the ship's commander, nervously waiting to be blown into eternity, make any effort to move them.

This state of affairs remained unchanged for some minutes, during which the strain of suspense was so unnerving that Captain Crosscut jumped as though a bomb had exploded beside him at a sudden, sharp cry from Mr. Bunker, who had ascended to the bridge.

While all others, including the captain, were so paralyzed by fright that they had no thought save to stare at the place where the submarine had made its appearance, the engineer, calmly lighting a big Manila cigar, which he smoked with evident enjoyment, allowed his gaze to traverse all sides as far as the encircling horizon. Finally, in the opposite direction from that in which the others were looking, his eyes encountered an object so extraordinary that for a moment he, too, was rendered speechless by amazement. Then he uttered his warning cry, at the same time pointing to a spot of commotion on the surface of the heaving waters.

All hands rushed to that side of the ship and from it gazed upon an apparition very nearly, if not quite, as terrifying as that of a few minutes earlier. What they now saw was a small black cylinder, its upper rim apparently but a few inches above the surface, rushing towards them in a smother of white water raised by its own rapid motion. From it projected a man's head, and, following at a short distance behind this marvel, unsupported by visible staff or halyard, fluttered the sun-rayed naval flag of Japan.

At this sight many of the superstitious crew fell on their knees with cries of terror.

"Another of 'em," muttered the captain. "We are surely done for now."

"Looks that way," agreed the engineer, puffing vigorously at his cigar, as though determined to enjoy it to the utmost during the few seconds left him.

CHAPTER XXIV

TAKAHAKI DEFENDS HIS PRIZE

To the great relief of all on board the *Honan*, the onrushing mystery, from which they had expected nothing short of sudden death, slackened its speed until it lay motionless not more than fifty yards from them. The person who, with head above the conning-tower, had directed its movements, now appeared on the tiny deck of his strange craft and disclosed himself to be a Japanese naval officer in full uniform.

Lifting his cap politely to the bridge, and indicating by a glance the flags at the steamer's masthead, he remarked, in English:

"I am see that you are surrender."

"Yes, and glad of the opportunity," replied Captain Crosscut. "We've already been partially blown up by one submarine, there's another somewhere under us trying to finish the job, and you are the third to have a finger in the pie. Also, you are the first that has given us a chance to communicate our readiness to surrender."

"What ship is it? Where from? Where to? What cargo?" demanded Takahaki.

"*Honan*, from Cardiff, with coal for Vladivostok," was the answer.

"And you surrender to this ship of his Imperial Majesty the Mikado of Japan?"

"I do, without reserve."

"Then, if you will lower side ladder and send boat, I will come on board for take possession. Same time I come alone, and if you do something not right, my boat will very quick diss-troy your ship. If I also am diss-troy, it will not any matter. I am glad to be diss-troy for my Mikado."

"He means it, too," remarked the *Honan's* engineer in a low tone to his captain. "I know these Japs. They'd rather die for their Mikado, as they call him, than do anything else you can name."

So Takahaki went on board the big, coal-laden freighter, where he assumed command without opposition; and when those who received him next looked over the side, the craft from which he had come was nowhere to be seen.

"Yes," he said, in reply to their inquiring glances, "I send him down for tell other submarine not now to blow up this ship."

"Thanks, awfully!" said Captain Crosscut.

"A most thoughtful thing to do," added engineer Bunker.

Then Takahaki began to issue orders, which were promptly obeyed. Thus the anchor was weighed and the ship was got under way, stern foremost, before he had been on board fifteen minutes. As soon as she was fairly in motion, steaming slowly

back over the course she had come the night before, the repair gang was again set to work patching the hole in her bow, under the supervision of Captain Crosscut, who, at the request of the new commander, had willingly agreed to aid in saving his own ship.

Upon taking possession, Takahaki's first move had been to disarm the captain and engineer. Then he ordered them to their respective staterooms, where he proposed to lock them in. Against this they had protested, offering, in exchange for their liberty, to aid him in navigating his prize to the nearest Japanese port. This offer had been accepted; and so it happened that, as the ill-used *Honan* began her backward movement, Captain Crosscut superintended the repairs to her bow, and Mr. Bunker occupied his usual position in the engine-room, while Takahaki Matsu gravely paced the bridge with four loaded revolvers depending from his belt and a pair of marine glasses in his hand.

Although the new commander strove to maintain a modest demeanor, he was intensely proud of his captures, which, if he only could get them to a Japanese port, would prove of such inestimable value to his country. He was quite certain that he could at least take them as far as Wonsan; for, as soon as the *Honan's* bow repairs were completed so that she could be turned around and driven head on, he proposed that she should tow the *Naisha*, thus relieving the latter's overworked crew

of two from their perilous position. At present he knew the submarine was obeying his parting instructions to keep pace with the *Honan* but out of sight from her deck, and ready to close in at signal; for, through his glasses, he could plainly distinguish the black spot representing her conning-tower some three cable-lengths away. For some time he watched her, thinking gratefully of his friend Dun Brown, without whose aid his present success could not have been gained. Then he slowly swept the horizon, first taking a long view ahead, and last of all looking astern. To his consternation, in that direction he saw not only a trail of dense smoke moving swiftly towards the *Honan*, but the low-lying hull from which it streamed.

In another minute Takahaki was in the pilot-house rummaging its signal-locker, from which he extracted three small flags that he bade a quarter-master to display aloft. This signal was an order for the *Naisha* to close in. Next he called down the engine-room tube for Mr. Bunker to stop his engines and report immediately, in person, on deck. When that gentleman appeared, the young commander said:

"The engineer of my submarine is in great trouble; will you go with me to help him?"

"Well, I don't know—" began Mr. Bunker.

"If you do that thing you shall not any more be prisoner when we reach Japanese port."

Still the other hesitated.

"That engineer is American man," added Takahaki.

"What! An American! Why didn't you say so at first? Of course I'll go with you."

By the time the *Honan* had again been anchored and Captain Crosscut had been ordered to continue his repairs with all speed during the temporary absence of the new commander, the *Naisha* was close at hand, and Dunster Brownleigh, looking from her conning-tower, was awaiting with some anxiety and much curiosity the coming of a small boat containtaining his friend and a stranger.

"What's up, Taki?" he asked, as the former gained the submarine's narrow deck. "Anything gone wrong?"

"Yes, Dun Brown," replied the young Japanese, in a tone too low to be overheard by Mr. Bunker. "A Rus-si-an diss-troyer is after us. I tell this engineer of steamer that you are American and in much trouble. So he come for help you. He does not yet know of that diss-troyer."

With an instant comprehension of the situation, Dunster dropped below and stood ready to receive his guest. In the handling-room the two gazed curiously at each other for a moment.

"Looks rather queer to find an American serving on a Japanese fighting-craft in time of war," remarked Mr. Bunker, after they had shaken hands.

"Any queerer than for another American to be helping the Russians by trying to run a cargo of contraband?"

"Oh, I was doing that for the big money there is in it."

"While I am doing this because the Russians have just murdered my grandfather, have sentenced me to be shot, and will kill me on sight if they catch me."

"Whew! And yet you say that you are an American?"

"Yes, born in Chicago."

"Same here. Good old town!"

"And now I want you to help me out. There's a Russian destroyer after us. Of course she will put us out of business if she can. Even if she only recaptures that steamer we will be left in a peck of trouble, for our supply of gasoline is too low to run us to a friendly port, and we are too short-handed to get to one, anyhow. Will you stay with us?"

"Sure I will, partner! When Chicago finds Chicago in a hole out here among the dagoes. Chicago helps Chicago every time. Just make me wise as to what you want done, and I'll do it till all's blue," was the hearty answer of American to American.

The distress signals sent up by the *Honan*, a few hours before, had been noted in Vladivostok; and, with earliest dawn, a torpedo-boat destroyer had been despatched to discover their meaning. This low-lying craft had sighted the big ship long before she herself was seen, and she stood towards the latter under full head of steam. As she approached close enough to distinguish the hated flag of Japan flying above the almost equally hated ensign of

Great Britain at the *Honan's* masthead, her engines were stopped and a solid shot was sent hurtling angrily over the anchored steamer. Although it had been aimed high and evidently without intention of hitting the ship, it cut the signal halyards, bringing the Japanese and British flags fluttering downward, and crashed through the pilot-house, into which Captain Crosscut had just entered.

At sight of the ominous craft, that looked as venomous as an angry cobra, the captain and his gang of workers had hastily regained the deck, from which, as the shot was fired, they were anxiously regarding this new menace to their safety. As the proud emblems of two great nations disappeared from view, the Russians, believing the flags they hated had been lowered at their command, and not realizing that their own shot had cut the halyards, prepared to take possession of the ship.

By this time they were lying, without steerage way, about a quarter of a mile from the *Honan*. They had but one small boat, and, as it was stowed amidships on deck, several minutes were required to get it over the side and into the water. While this was being done, the lieutenant commanding the destroyer was giving final instructions to the junior officer detailed to board.

"The audacity of those pig-headed islanders!" he exclaimed, "For daring to fly a flag of the Makaki in Russian waters, you will, immediately upon taking possession, clap that captain in irons and confine him in the depths of his own hold. We

will teach him that that flag may not be shown with impunity off Vladivostok."

"Very good, sir," answered the junior, saluting and turning to depart. As he faced about he uttered a cry of amazement. From a direction opposite to that in which lay the steamer, one of the very objects they had been discussing, a sun-rayed flag of Japan, was skimming the sea less than a thousand yards distant and advancing towards them, apparently upborne on a swirl of white waters. A few feet ahead of it rushed a round bit of blackness.

"Holy St. Michael!" cried the lieutenant. "A Japanese submarine directly upon us, and I didn't know the beggars owned such a craft. Dose her with the Maxim! Cut that boat adrift! Full speed ahead! Quick, for your lives!"

So suddenly overwhelming was the surprise, and so unnerving was the terror inspired by this dreadful form of enemy, that for a minute these orders only produced a scene of the wildest confusion. Then a midship rapid-fire was trained, and with tigerish snarl it began to spit out a torrent of bullets that tore the sea into foam about the approaching craft without in the least affecting its steady onrush. The hissing balls stung harmlessly at the thick steel of the *Naisha's* conning-tower, and one rent her defiant flag, but that was all. They could no more check her relentless advance than if they had been so many dried peas shot from a popgun.

Peering from a slit directly under the cap of her

conning-tower stood Takahaki Matsu, steadfast of purpose, clear-eyed, and with every muscle rigid. A few feet beneath him, intent only upon the duties he had so recently assumed, an American engineer calmly watched his bearings and his oil-cups. In the handling-room, two tense figures, representing the most western nation of the world and its most eastern, here united in bonds of closest sympathy, sternly awaited the word from above that should rouse them to fateful action.

A range-finder showed the Russian to be but five hundred yards distant; then four hundred, three hundred, and finally but two hundred yards away. At this Takahaki gave the command to fire.

Instantly the motionless figures at the breech of the torpedo-tube sprang into active life. As one flung open the bow port and admitted water, Dunster Brownleigh turned on the sudden blast of compressed air that cleared the tube of its deadly missile and started it in arrow flight towards the destroyer. Almost at the same moment the *Naisha's* young commander staggered backward, and his body, slipping from the conning-tower platform, fell heavily to the floor of the handling-room. As Dunster sprang to his friend's assistance, he was conscious of a heavy explosion close at hand.

CHAPTER XXV

MUTINY ON BOARD

Anxious to witness the effect of his torpedo, Takahaki, peering through a narrow slit, had pressed his face against the steel side of the conning-tower at the very moment that it was struck by the last shot fired by the doomed destroyer. The impact stunned him, and he fell apparently lifeless. For a few minutes the diminished crew of the submarine were so busy attending to him and with their engines, that they failed to note what was taking place outside. When Dunster Brownleigh, who believed that his friend was dead, finally took station in the conning-tower and lifted its cap for a clear view abroad, no trace of their recent enemy was to be seen, save only an empty and idly drifting yawl-boat. The torpedo had thoroughly accomplished its fatal mission; and with a heavy heart the young American directed the course of his little craft towards the still-anchored steamer.

There he was met by news that her captain had been killed in the pilot-house, and found himself confronted by the sole responsibility of navigating the great ship across the stormy Japan Sea to a place of safety. For a moment his heart sank like

lead, and he shrank from the perilous undertaking. But it was only for a moment, and then he was roused from his despondency by the voice of his fellow-American.

"Well, sir," remarked Mr. Bunker, "it's up to you to say what we shall do next. Kinder looks to me as if we should have to try for Vladivostok, after all."

"I'm sorry if it looks that way to you," replied Dunster, briskly, "for it doesn't to me. I had just about concluded to run for Tsushima."

"But that's nearly eight hundred miles away," objected the other.

"I know it."

"And we haven't a navigator on board."

"I think you are mistaken there, sir."

"What, are you a navigator as well as an engineer?"

"I believe I may lay claim to such knowledge of navigation as is taught to officers of the American navy."

"You don't mean that you are an Annapolis man?"

"I am sir, or rather I was."

"Then all I can say is that the mystery of how you happen to be where you are gets thicker and thicker the more one looks into it. But it's all right, far as I'm concerned; and, as I said a while back, Chicago 'll stand by Chicago as long as there's a pound of steam in the boiler."

"Thank you," replied Dunster. "When I plan-

ned to try for Tsushima I was counting pretty largely on your help, without which I doubt if the stunt could be done. We did think of Wonsan; but without a pilot I am afraid of the coast, and, anyway, I'd rather deliver this ship directly to the Japanese admiral commanding in these waters."

"I know—Kamimura. Nice old chap. Took me prisoner once before when he was captain of a gun-boat and I was 'listed on a Chinese battle-ship. Treated me white, too. I'll be proud to meet up with him again."

"Then you, too, are a navy man?"

"Oh, not to brag of. Same time, I've seen some service."

"Good!" exclaimed Dunster. "That makes me feel all the more certain that we can do the trick."

An hour later the *Honan* was again under way and steaming southward, this time head on, for the repairs to her bow had been completed as thoroughly as circumstances would permit. Takahaki, cared for by his faithful countryman, lay still unconscious in the bunk that Captain Crosscut would nevermore need, while the *Naisha* towed behind the steamer at the end of a long hawser. In the chart-room sat Dunster Brownleigh studying a chart of the Japan Sea, and at the same time sipping, with intense satisfaction, a cup of very black coffee, the first he had tasted since leaving the *Cochise*, and which seemed to him just about the finest beverage that ever had passed his lips. He had found no difficulty in assuming command or

in having his orders obeyed, for the villanous-looking crew not only were cowed by the pistols conspicuously worn by him, by Mr. Bunker, and by the Japanese, but apparently they still were awed by the proximity of the *Naisha* and the memory of what had happened to the Russian destroyer that had dared defy her. So they jumped to obey orders, and never before had the discipline of the ship been better.

At sunset of that same evening the body of the steamer's late, unfortunate captain was consigned to the sea, while above it the solemn service of committal was read, in choking voice, by the young man who had so strangely succeeded to his command.

When the sad ceremony was ended, Dunster hastened to the bedside of his friend, who, for a few minutes had been left alone, and to his joy found the latter lying with wide-open eyes.

"Thank God, Taki, that you are alive!" cried the new-comer. "Do you know me, old man?"

"Yes, Dun Brown, I am know you," replied the other, weakly. "But I am not know this place. Is it hospitle?"

"Hospital? No, of course not. It is your own room on board the ship that you captured, and which we are taking to Japan. But this is your watch below and mine on deck. So go to sleep and I will call you at the right time."

"Was there not a diss-troyer?"

"Yes, but she disappeared long ago, and now

there's nothing to bother. So go to sleep, like a good chap, or else I won't promise to wake you for your watch."

Without further remonstrance Takahaki closed his eyes, and a little later was wrapped in the sleep that more surely than any other known remedy would restore his exhausted energies. After that, for nearly two hours, Dunster alternately watched the ship's course from the pilot-house and his sleeping friend in the adjoining room. Then he touched a bell and ordered the Chinese steward who answered it to bring him a cup of hot coffee. Giving this order in the captain's room, Dunster failed to notice that the steward passed out through the pilot-house, where he exchanged a whisper with the man at the wheel. When the coffee came, Dunster drank it eagerly, though wondering somewhat at its extra bitterness. Five minutes later he sat in an arm-chair before the captain's desk, to which his head had sunk, buried in profound slumber. Eight bells came and went without his knowledge. The Chinese quartermaster at the wheel was relieved by another, and as the relieved man passed from the pilot-house he glanced into the captain's room. There a lamp burned dimly, and for a moment the sailor hesitated, apparently fascinated by what he saw. Then he passed on and was lost in the outer darkness.

A few minutes afterwards he returned, and, with his heavy sea-boots exchanged for felt-soled slippers, crept noiselessly along the deserted deck until he

reached a side door to the captain's room. Opening this the fraction of an inch, he peered within. All was as before. One motionless form occupied the captain's bed, and another, with loud breathings, slept heavily in a chair beside the desk. Thus reassured, the intruder slipped into the room, carefully closing the door behind him. It had made no noise, but with its opening a draught of damp air rushed through the pilot-house, where, beside the man at the wheel, another who had just entered watched intently the trembling compass-card of the binnacle.

That draught of air from the captain's room blew cold on this man's face, and he stepped to the communicating door to learn its cause. What he saw was a crouching figure creeping up behind the sleeper in the chair, who so recently had proved himself a friend of Japan. Even as he looked, this figure rose to its full height and uplifted something that shone dully in the dim light. In another moment Dunster Brownleigh's slumber would have been merged in the dreamless sleep of death; but his hour was not yet come. With a spring as noiseless and agile as that of a cat, the man who served Japan's Mikado landed on the back of the would-be assassin, and a few seconds later laid him gently on the floor, dead, with a broken neck. Then the Japanese closed the door connecting with the pilot-house, turned the key in its lock, and opened that leading on deck. Through this he dragged the still quivering body of the Chinese who, but a moment

before, had believed himself to be owner of the ship, and bundled it over the rail into the oblivion of a night-shrouded sea. The Mikado's man had not been three minutes gone from the pilot-house before he again stood beside the binnacle peering at its wavering compass-card, and he who steered knew naught of what had happened during the short interval of the other's absence.

With the next striking of eight bells, Dunster was awakened by the Japanese now acting as first officer, and invited to a midnight lunch in the mess-room, where he found Mr. Bunker already at the table. The latter reported an incipient mutiny in his department, early in the evening, that he had promptly quelled by knocking out two of the engine-room crew who had attempted to surprise him when they thought him asleep in his chair, and scattering the others by a show of levelled pistols.

"I don't know what the beggars were up to," concluded Mr. Bunker, "but I'm ready for 'em every time; for, whenever I find it necessary to take a nap in my chair it's always with one eye and both ears wide open."

"Well, I'm glad there wasn't any trouble on deck," replied Dunster, "for I am ashamed to say I've been sound asleep, with both ears and both eyes, ever since before eight bells. But I'm good now for another spell of duty, and, first, I'll relieve the mate while he eats his supper. Then he'll have to stand another watch on deck while I relieve you

in the engine-room; that is, if you are willing to trust me with your engine."

"Well, I guess yes. The man who can handle the insides of a submarine surely can be trusted with the simple machinery of an old, Clyde-built hooker like this. Besides, there'll be nothing to do unless something goes smash, for I've got a well-drilled crew below. Only you want to watch 'em every minute, for the devil himself seems to be with them this night."

"All right," answered Dunster. "I'll watch 'em, for I'm wide-awake now and intend to keep so."

Shortly afterwards, when the young commander again turned over the deck to his first officer, and started below to relieve his weary engineer, the former said to him, in Japanese: "Abunai! Ki wo suke nasai" (There is danger! Look out for yourself!); and Dunster, thinking he referred to Mr. Bunker's recent experience, laughed as he answered: "Arigato. Sukoshi monai osoreru" (Thanks. I am not at all afraid).

An hour later the self-confident lad from Annapolis found himself backed into a corner of the *Honan's* engine-room and fighting for his life against a dozen or more slippery, dirt-begrimed firemen, oilers, and coal-passers. Some were yellow and wore pigtails coiled about their heads; while others were swarthy, lean, and with fierce, snakelike eyes. He had been able to fire but a single shot before they had rushed him into the corner, where, with naked hands, he struggled hopelessly against their overwhelming numbers.

CHAPTER XXVI

"TASUKETE!"

ACCORDING to previous statement, the *Honan* was manned by a scrub crew hastily gathered at Shanghai. Even they had shipped only upon promise of unusually high wages; for the navigating of those seas in war-time, even by neutrals, was an extra hazardous undertaking. Still, as the ship was cleared for Che-Foo, a short and comparatively safe run, they were tempted by the inducement, and performed their duties faithfully until, to their dismay, they found themselves off the eastern coast of Korea, exposed to the fire of Japanese cruisers, and so evidently bound for Vladivostok that the nature of the venture on which they were embarked could no longer be concealed from them. Three of their number were killed by a chance shot fired in a fog, and shortly afterwards the ship narrowly escaped total wreckage on the Liancourt Rocks. Then the panic-stricken crew mutinied and demanded to be taken back to Shanghai.

After quelling this outbreak, Captain Crosscut acknowledged the true objective point of his voyage, and promised to double his crew's already high rate of wage upon safe arrival at the Russian port.

With the subsequent career of the unfortunate ship to the time when, almost within sight of Vladivostok, she was compelled to begin retracing her weary way, we already are familiar; also, we can fully appreciate the satisfaction with which her new commander headed her to the southward. Her crew, however, were by no means as satisfied as he with the changed condition of affairs. They realized that they were being carried back to probable captivity, possible death, and a certain loss of the golden reward promised them upon arrival at Vladivostok. And all this at the command of but three men, one of whom was believed to be, for the present, at least, helpless, while they numbered thirty. Also, they fancied Mr. Bunker to be in similar position with themselves as to probable loss of pay and freedom under existing conditions, and imagined that, if they could gain possession of the ship by overcoming the others, he would be willing to aid them in carrying her to Vladivostok. Therefore, in forming their plans, while they were determined to kill the three who had come from the submarine, they only proposed to make him a prisoner, and thus hold him until he should accede to their terms. In pursuance of this design they had, earlier in the night, made simultaneous attacks upon him and upon the steamer's new commander, to whom had been given a cup of drugged coffee, both of which were defeated, as we know.

These failures, instead of discouraging the mutineers, only rendered them desperate and more than

ever determined to effect their purpose. They knew that every mile of added distance on their present course increased the difficulties of a return to Vladivostok, and that it was vital to the success of their plans to gain possession of the ship that very night. Therefore, when Mr. Bunker retired to his room for the rest he so greatly needed, and Dunster Brownleigh assumed his duties, the leaders of the mutiny believed that the most favorable opportunity for carrying out their design had arrived. But they waited until Mr. Bunker slept and Dunster had become sufficiently familiar with his new surroundings to be less keenly observant of what was taking place than at first.

At length the young engineer, sitting with a loaded revolver lying across his knees, was meditatively regarding the speed indicator and calculating the number of hours that must elapse before Tsushima could be reached. Everything about him was quiet, save for the steady throb of machinery, and no other person occupied the room, though the forms of oilers on duty could dimly be seen now and then as they moved about the mighty machine for which they cared.

Suddenly there came a fierce rush of escaping steam from a cock, purposely opened, close at hand, and instinctively Dunster sprang to the throttle-lever. The pistol that had rested on his knees fell to the floor, and, as he turned to recover it, after shutting off steam, the room swarmed with menacing figures coming from both directions at once.

He barely had time to leap into a corner where the walls of the room protected him on two sides, and to fire a single shot from a second revolver that had hung from his belt, before the mutineers were upon him and he was using his otherwise ineffective weapon as a club to beat them back. Behind him was an electric switchboard. A knife, flung with uncertain aim at his head, struck this, and instantly the scene of conflict was shrouded in darkness. In a moment the ex-captain of the Annapolis team had adopted football tactics, and with lowered head was furiously "bucking" the scrimmage in which nearly every man held another by the throat, while such as had knives were using them furiously and at random.

How Dunster gained the doorway he never knew, but gain it he did, and he staggered out on the lower deck just in time to catch a sound of swiftly approaching footsteps. Panting and trembling from his recent exertions, he was bracing himself to meet a further attack, when on his ears fell the welcome sound of an exclamation uttered in Japanese.

"Tasukete!" (Help!), he cried, and, to his amazement, he was answered in the well-known voice of the dear friend whom he had left an hour earlier, as he supposed, helpless in the captain's room.

"Dun Brown!" cried Takahaki. "Is it you? Are you still live?"

"I believe so," was the reply; "but that I am alive isn't the fault of those black pirates inside. They have been trying hard enough to kill me."

From the engine-room came sounds of a fierce struggle; for the mutineers had not yet discovered the escape of their intended victim, and were fighting each other in the dark.

Without another word Takahaki stepped to the doorway and emptied his revolver into the yawning blackness. The first shot was followed by yells of terror, but the last was echoed only by whimpering moans. A man in pajamas and bringing a lighted lantern appeared.

"What's the row?" he asked, sleepily. "Want any help?"

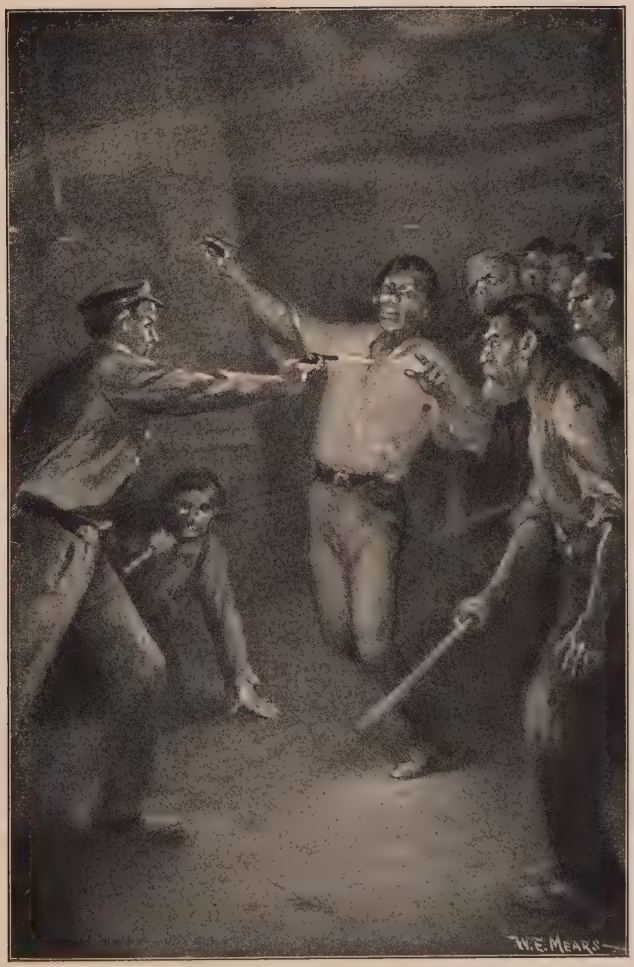
"I don't believe so, Mr. Bunker," replied Dunster, striving to speak cheerfully. "It was a row, but I guess it's all over now."

"Sounded like it. I thought you'd have one, but I knew you'd come out topside somehow, for Chicago always does. But who is this? Not the captain! Why, sir, I thought you were laid up for repairs."

"Yes, but I now am very ready for fight again. I become awake very well and was drink some tea, when through that telephone I hear trouble in engine-room and so come for see it."

"Engine-room telephone was the very thing that brought me here," said Mr. Bunker. "I always leave it open and sleep with the receiver close by my head. But let's look inside."

The floor of that engine-room resembled a shambles. In pools of their own blood lay four dead Lascars and two Chinese desperately wounded.



"THE MUTINEERS WERE UPON HIM"

The remainder of the mutineers had disappeared. Dunster was bleeding from a couple of knife cuts, but neither of them was serious, and he declared that the affair left him in better shape for duty than had any one of a dozen football games that he could recall.

After a brief inspection of the scene of battle, Takahaki, whom the urgent necessity for action seemed to have restored to his normal strength, ordered every light throughout the ship to be turned on. Then, in the general illumination, he and Dunster made a thorough search of both upper and lower decks, driving forward, at the point of their revolvers, to a place guarded by the Japanese and Mr. Bunker, every member of the crew they could discover. There the mutineers were searched for knives, that were flung overboard as fast as found. One brutal-looking coal-passer, whose blood-stained head-cloth proclaimed him to have been a participant in the recent attack on Dunster, pretended to give up his knife, but in the act of handing it over he made a vicious lunge at the heart of the Japanese who was holding out his hand to receive it.

Like a flash the latter knocked the Lascar's hand to one side, and in another instant a bullet from Takahaki's ready pistol had pierced the would-be murderer's brain.

"It is not nice for do such thing," remarked the young commander to his friend as he carefully inserted another cartridge in the chamber of his re-

revolver; "but it is the war for which we study at Annapolis, and so we must always be ready for do him."

"Yes, and do him before he gets the chance to do you," remarked Mr. Bunker. "That's my motto every time. 'Tisn't exactly the golden rule, but it's the iron rule of war, and the only one by which the game can be successfully played."

After this lesson the crew submitted without further struggle, the dead were flung overboard, and the wounded were roughly cared for by their shipmates, who, with the exception of half a dozen chosen by Mr. Bunker for immediate duty, were locked into the forecastle.

Although thus crippled almost to helplessness, the *Honan* was forced southward by the indomitable wills of a Japanese middy and his devoted American friend. The former took turns with his countryman at standing armed watch on deck, while Dunster and Mr. Bunker relieved each other in the engine-room. In this condition it took them four days to reach the latitude of Tsushima, and the islands barely had been sighted before a Japanese torpedo-boat, on patrol duty in the Korean Strait, dashed alongside. Her commander could hardly believe the evidence of his senses when he found but two of his own countrymen on board, and was told that they, aided only by a young American, had captured a submarine from the Russians, with it had compelled the surrender of this ship, incidentally sinking a Russian destroyer with all on board,

and then, after quelling two mutinies, had brought their prizes safely across the Japan Sea.

"It cannot be," he said. "Excuse me if I doubt your story, but it is too improbable. I will send you to the admiral, and we will see if before him you will dare repeat such a fairy tale."

So a prize crew was placed on board the *Honan*, her captors were relieved from duty, and she was ordered into Idzu Harra, the landlocked harbor of the Tsushimas that served as a base for Admiral Kamimura's blockading squadron.

"It is outrageous!" declared Dunster, indignantly, as, with his three companions, he stood on the after-deck watching the torpedo-boat that was speeding away in pursuit of another smoke trail. "Taki, I wouldn't have believed that an own countryman would so doubt your word."

"It is great compliment," smiled the deposed commander. "I think so. My countryman"—here the speaker indicated the Japanese who had been with them from the first—"him think so, too."

"In a way you are right," agreed Mr. Bunker. "At the same time it is pretty rough on you fellows, after all your good work, to go in as prisoners, or at least as suspects, instead of with the flying colors you deserve. As for me, it makes no difference, seeing that I am a prisoner of war anyway. But say, why don't you three desert this ship? There isn't a soul looking. Go aboard your own boat—we can haul her up short enough for you to slip down the

hawser—run into Idzu ahead of us—you can easily outfoot this old cripple — and get your report in first."

"Great scheme!" shouted Dunster, his eyes glistening with excitement. "Will you do it, Taki?"

"Hei. It is fine scheme! Yes, I will do."

Thus it happened that, half an hour later, when the young fellow from the torpedo-boat now commanding the *Honan* sat down to a dinner brought to the captain's room, his appetite was suddenly destroyed by a report that the queer thing, said to be a submarine, that had dragged behind them was no longer to be seen at the end of the tow-line.

At this the officer, who was very inexperienced, and who knew little or nothing of submarines, rushed aft to verify the report. Then he ordered the ship stopped, and instituted a search for the missing craft that revealed nothing more tangible than the frayed end of the hawser by which she had towed. Thus it became evident to the dismayed young man that the submarine had parted her tow-line and gone adrift.

CHAPTER XXVII

TAKING FRENCH LEAVE

First Takahaki, then Dunster, and, last of all, their Japanese companion slid down the taut hawser and gained the wet deck of the *Naisha* in safety. Of course, they were thoroughly drenched, for the boat had been left with deck nearly awash, and the speed at which she now was dragged through the water drove a bow wave completely over it. Thus for a minute, or until Mr. Bunker on the deck of the *Honan* could cut the hawser, the three adventurers were compelled to hang on for dear life, and with difficulty kept their heads above water. Then came a sudden release, and almost instantly, as the *Naisha* dropped astern, her deck was freed from its overrushing wave, and her half-strangled crew were enabled once more to breathe with comfort.

At once they got to work, and while Takahaki and Dunster, lifting the conning-tower hatch, hastened below to start the engine, their Japanese comrade hacked away at the trailing end of the hawser until he had cut it loose. The others found the interior perfectly dry, with everything as they had left it five days before. Thus, in a few minutes, the gasoline motor was "chugging" away merrily and

the *Naisha* was again in motion under her own power.

For a time they followed at full speed the ship from which they had taken French leave, gradually overhauling her, though not so rapidly as they had hoped, while the green heights of the Tsu Islands were fast rising dead ahead. They were beginning to fear that she would reach port first, when suddenly she stopped and then began to circle slowly as though in search of something.

"Just discovered that we are missing!" shouted Dunster, gleefully. "Now if that chap will only hunt for us long enough we'll do the trick nicely."

And hunt the *Honan* did, clumsily but perseveringly, for the next hour; while the *Naisha*, with only alliscope and air-pipe above the surface, slipped past her undetected and ran for the hidden harbor, with every foot of which Takahaki was perfectly familiar.

A mile off the entrance a torpedo-boat on guard cruised slowly back and forth; but the submarine, diving, evaded her without being noticed, and, rising boldly to the surface, ran through a narrow entrance into the smooth waters of a landlocked basin. Several transports and one lead-colored cruiser lay at anchor inside. The latter looked very business-like in her war-paint, stripped of every superfluous article and with polished gun-muzzles grinning from turret and shield. From her masthead floated the broad pennant of a rear-admiral, and towards this ship Takahaki directed the *Naisha's* course.

Suddenly there came a peremptory hail, through a megaphone, from the cruiser.

"Stop instantly where you are! If you advance fifty feet farther you will be fired upon!"

With all haste the engine was reversed and an anchor was got overboard.

Again came the megaphone hail: "What craft is that? Who are you, and what are you doing here?"

"It is submarine *Naisha*, belonging to his Imperial Majesty the Mikado," replied Takahaki. "I am Midshipman Matsu, in command, and have here come to report to his excellency Admiral Kamimura."

Directly afterwards came the order: "Compliments of the admiral, and you will be received on board at once."

"But I have no boat."

"Then will we send one."

A few minutes later the *Naisha's* entire crew stood on the deck of the flag-ship. An officer, stepping forward to greet them, hesitated, stared, and then hastily retreated. A moment later he returned, and, bowing low, not before Takahaki, nor before Dunster Brownleigh, but before their humble Japanese companion, begged the honor of conducting *him* to the admiral's cabin.

"Well, I like that!" exclaimed Dunster. "Who is he, Taki? Do you suppose these duffers take *him* for the boss of our outfit?"

"I am not know who he is," replied the other, "only that he is Nippon man. Also, I cannot tell

why he is go for see admiral, for it is certainly known that I am commander."

"You say that you know nothing about the man, and yet you have trusted him all this time? Why, Taki, he might have been a traitor in Russian employ."

"Dun Brown," answered Takahaki, vehemently, "of all millions of Nippon man not one could be a traitor to his Mikado. Such thing is impos-sible. No, my friend, he is Nippon man, and so cannot be traitor. Why that admiral wish to see him instead of see me, I may not ask; for on this ship the admiral stand in place of the Mikado, and so what thing he do is right thing."

Further conversation was interrupted by the return of the officer who had received them, and who now courteously invited them to accept the hospitalities of the wardroom while awaiting the admiral's pleasure.

Every man of the wardroom mess, trim, alert, and showing faces alive with intelligence, rose upon their entrance and gave them greeting at once polite and cordial. Refreshments were placed before them, and in the general conversation that ensued innumerable questions were asked concerning the handling and efficiency of submarines. At the same time, there was no trace of curiosity as to the personal affairs of the guests. Ordinary Japanese politeness forbids the asking of such questions, while, according to navy etiquette, to seek information from officers who had not yet reported to the admiral would constitute an unpardonable offence.

At the end of half an hour spent thus pleasantly, an orderly appeared and, saluting, announced that the admiral would receive Lieutenant Matsu and his friend.

As they entered the simply furnished after-cabin, a kindly appearing man in undress uniform, who was pacing the floor and dictating to a stenographer, courteously returned their salutes, and said:

"Lieutenant Matsu, I congratulate you upon your successful accomplishment of the mission upon which you were sent to Vladivostok. You were ordered to render a certain submarine torpedo-boat unserviceable to the Russians, and you have done this by carrying her off under their very noses. Also, you have sunk one of their destroyers and have captured one of their coal-ships, which I understand is momentarily expected to reach this port. Is all this true?"

"Yes, honorable sir, it is very true; but also none of it could have been done without the wonderful aid of this my friend Brownleigh San, of America, and of one other Nippon man, who I perceive has already made report to your excellency most flattering to me, though I no longer see him."

"No, lieutenant, as he was in haste to reach Nagasaki I already have sent him in a swift boat. He left regards for you, and doubtless you will hear from him presently. As to your friend, I am well informed of his valuable service to our cause, and I proffer him my profoundest gratitude. Also, I am going to ask him to place us under still further

obligation. Is your boat in condition for immediate service?"

"With a very little of repairs and some fresh supplies, she is ready, sir."

"Then, lieutenant, though you well have earned a rest, I cannot give it to you. Port Arthur is not yet fallen. The Russian ships sheltered in its harbor are not yet destroyed. The Baltic fleet is on its way to form a junction, which thing may not be permitted. The admiral (Togo) wishes more than anything for a submarine. You will take him one, going from here under convoy of a despatch-boat which I am to send at once. If possible you will start within two hours. Of the great kindness of your friend, who is more familiar with the submarine than any of our officers, I will ask that he go with you for the giving of instruction to the engineers of the admiral. Will you speak to him and ask if he will consent to do this one more great thing for the Mikado, in whose cause he has already rendered such honorable service."

"Dun Brown," said Takahaki, "the admiral order me to take that *Naisha* quick to Port Arthur. He say it will please him for you also to go to Port Arthur, if you are willing for do such great thing for the Mikado. Are you willing for go?"

"Am I willing? Taki, I am afraid you are getting dotty! The idea of asking me such a question, when Port Arthur is the one place in all the world that I am most anxious to visit just now. Tell him that I not only accept his kind invitation with joy

and gratitude, but that if he had sent you off without me I should have taken possession of one of his ships, perhaps this very one, and followed you. If I couldn't have done it alone I'd have got Bunker to help me. Then how would your admiral have felt?"

Takahaki noted with dismay a twinkle in the admiral's eye that seemed to indicate a certain knowledge of the English language, and he hastened to make formal announcement that his friend Brownleigh San had kindly consented to carry out his (the admiral's) wishes.

At this the latter expressed his gratitude to Brownleigh San by making that young gentleman a profound bow, a courtesy that "Dun Brown" returned in his very best Annapolis dancing-class manner.

Then the admiral, turning to Takahaki, said, "Mr. Matsu, you will oblige me by at once filling out your requisition for such men and supplies as are necessary, and by making all speed with your preparations for departure."

"Very good, sir," replied Takahaki, saluting and turning to leave. Then he remembered a certain omission that he hastened to rectify by saying:

"Excuse me, honorable sir, but there is one more word to be said. It is of another American, engineer of that *Honan*, shortly to arrive, who aided us so greatly in bringing her that he has been promised his freedom and a reward."

"I already know of him, and all promises made shall be kept."

"Also one question, honorable sir. May I ask why you call me by that honorable title of lieutenant?"

"For the reason that you were commissioned lieutenant more than two months ago. Did you not know of it? It was for service at Port Arthur," was the smiling reply.

"Taki, I do congratulate you!" cried Dunster, seizing his friend's hand, when the two were safely beyond the sacred precincts of the admiral's cabin. "To think that you've been a luff all this time, and we never suspected it! I say, old man, see if you can't scare up a new uniform before we leave for the seat of war, bearing the insignia of your exalted rank, and all that sort of thing, you know. If you do make the raise, I wish you'd give me a hand-out of your old clothes, for I begin to feel very disreputable by contrast with my present surroundings."

So Takahaki requisitioned not only a new uniform for himself, but one for his friend as well, and got them both; only his bore certain bullion-embroidered bars and chrysanthemums that were lacking on that issued to the young American. Still, as the latter said, it was navy cut, of navy cloth, and it made him feel good to get into navy blue once more.

In less than the allotted time, the *Naisha*, having on board a crew of six carefully selected men from the flag-ship, and escorted by a trim-looking despatch-boat, left the haven she had so recently entered and started to round the southern extremity

of Korea, preparatory to crossing the Yellow Sea. As she went out of Idzu Harra she met the *Honan*, which had wasted much time searching for her, coming in. The young officer in command of the freighter glared at the submarine in speechless indignation, not unmixed with amazement, while Mr. Bunker, being notified of their passing, rushed up on deck to wave his late companions a combined greeting and farewell.

CHAPTER XXVIII

HOW TOGO BLOCKADED PORT ARTHUR

Sixty miles northeast from Port Arthur lie the Elliot group of small islands, low, treeless, and grass-covered, commanding the entrance of Yentoa Bay. The latter is a deep indentation of the Liao Tung peninsula, and at the head of this bay was landed the Japanese army that should besiege Port Arthur. In order to secure the transports immunity from attack by Russian torpedo-boats that lay in wait at both Port Arthur and Dalny, the Japanese, in three weeks' time, constructed the most remarkable boom-defence known to the history of war. It was composed of a double line of floating timbers, no one of which was less than two feet in diameter, fastened together by heavy chains, and supplemented throughout its entire length by a four-and-a-half-inch steel hawser. Depending from this gigantic boom were miles of wire screens and heavy fishing-nets in readiness to entangle the propellers of any steam-vessels that might break through the barrier. From Terminal Head on the main-land to the first island, this mighty boom crossed six miles of open seaway subject to swift-rushing tides, fierce storms, and great waves. Then it connected island

with island until the outermost of the Elliot group was reached, and a wellnigh impregnable chain of defence ten miles in length was completed. With this accomplished the busy fleet of transports from Japan came and went in safety.

At the end of a single month the Russians had been so driven back that this method of defence was no longer considered necessary. Therefore the first six-mile length of the boom was taken to pieces and removed, thus leaving a free passage for the ships of Admiral Togo's blockading fleet, which found quiet anchorage and a most convenient base of supplies in the very centre of the Elliot group.

Perhaps some of my more thoughtful readers will here protest: "But you have said that these islands were sixty miles from Port Arthur. How, then, was it possible for Admiral Togo to maintain a blockade, with his fleet at such a distance?"

Of course, you will have imagined the Mikado's blockading fleet to lie off the Russian harbor as did Admiral Sampson's ships in front of Santiago during our own war with Spain. And that is just what Admiral Togo must have done three or four years earlier in order to maintain his blockade. Then wireless telegraphy had not been invented, nor mechanical, floating mines perfected. At the time of the Russo-Japanese war both of these devices were at the great admiral's disposal, and he made use of them to lighten as far as possible his strenuous task.

So narrow and obstructed was the entrance to

Port Arthur that but one ship might issue at a time, moving very slowly for fear of mines that the Japanese planted just outside the entrance on every dark night. Beyond the zone of mines a flotilla of swift torpedo-boats were always on watch. Each of these was equipped with a wireless outfit that kept them in constant communication with the Japanese fleet lying snugly at anchor in a quiet harbor sixty miles away.

Once, when the Russian fleet did go out, it occupied six hours in the operation; while in less than four hours from the sending of the first wireless alarm Admiral Togo's entire force of battle-ships, cruisers, destroyers, and torpedo-boats was on hand waiting for the enemy to leave the protection of his forts. The Russians, not yet sufficiently desperate to risk a general engagement, looked longingly at the open sea, looked apprehensively at Togo's grim battle-line, and then sorrowfully steamed back into their battery-protected harbor. When they had disappeared behind the forts, the Japanese, disappointed, of course, but having more confidence than ever in their own methods of blockade, returned to their comfortable station among the Elliot Islands.

To this place, towards the close of a gray winter's day, came the *Naisha*. Her convoy had signalled their approach, by wireless, when still one hundred miles distant. Then she had dashed ahead, leaving the slower submarine to follow on a course already carefully indicated. Takahaki had visited the Elliot Islands before, and so knew what to expect;

but to Dunster Brownleigh the scene opened by rounding a sandy point, after an hour's run along the desolate coast of Da Chan Island, was so startling that he gasped with amazement.

In a deep, almost land-locked harbor, screened from observation by four surrounding islands, was disclosed the ultimate hope of Japan, Admiral Togo's mighty fleet of battle-ships, cruisers, destroyers, hospital-ships, colliers, repair-ships, and transports, lying quietly at anchor, with banked fires, but in readiness for instant action. On the low beach beyond were vast accumulations of coal, provisions, munitions, and supplies of every description, piled in the open or stored in long ranges of shedlike structures from which substantial wharves extended to deep water. Everywhere, over the placid surface, darted launches and despatch-boats; everywhere were signs of ceaseless activity without a trace of confusion; and over all proudly floated the sun-rayed banner of Japan, the new world-power of the Orient.

High above one great battle-ship hung the blue-starred flag of an admiral. "It is the *Mikasa*," said Takahaki, "and there must we make report."

So the *Naisha*, watched with eager curiosity by thousands of officers and men, who never before had seen her like, threaded her way towards the flag-ship until finally she lay alongside. She was barely made fast when an active little middy ran down the side-ladder and announced that the commander of the submarine, together with his American friend, was expected on deck.

Promptly obeying this summons, our young friends were welcomed at the gangway by Vice-Admiral Shimmamura, a fine-looking officer, who acted as chief of staff, and who informed them that the admiral would receive them at once. A minute later they stood in the presence of the foremost sailor of Japan, and possibly of the world. He was a little man, small even for a Japanese, with stiff, black hair standing straight up from his head, and bristling, iron-gray imperial and mustache. His features were expressionless as a mask, but their every line was of dauntless resolve and absolute firmness. Although noted as being a stern man of the fewest possible words, his face lighted at the entrance of our lads, and he gave them kindly greeting.

Both of them were at that moment covered with confusion, caused not only by finding themselves in the presence of so great a man, but by having been announced as "Lieutenant-Commander Matsu" and "The Count Casimir, of Warsaw."

"What a queer mistake!" thought Takahaki.

"How could they know of that?" mentally asked Dunster.

Noting their confusion, and readily guessing its cause, the admiral promptly set his young countryman at ease by saying:

"It is all right, Mr. Matsu. The announcement of your promotion for good service, recently rendered, came by wire from Tokio yesterday, and your commission as lieutenant-commander is now

on its way. I reserved to myself the pleasure of being the first to greet you by your new and well-won title."

"Honorable sir, it is too much!" stammered Takahaki. "I do very little thing—what any Nippŏn man might do; and but for this my friend it could not have been done at all."

"I know," replied the admiral. "To this friend, the Count Casimir, of Warsaw, who prefers to call himself 'Brownleigh San, of America,' Japan owes much. Already has it been told to the Mikado what he has done for us, and I am instructed to inform him that his Majesty's personal thanks, sent by special courier, will reach him very soon."

As these words had been spoken in English, Dunster replied by saying:

"While I am deeply grateful to his Majesty, as well as to you, sir, I cannot conceive how the Mikado has so promptly been made aware of certain private matters that I supposed only known to my friend here and myself."

The admiral's eyes twinkled as he answered: "The secret service of Russia is famous throughout the world. While that of Japan is not so widely advertised, it is, perhaps, equally efficient. In it are men of highest rank and finest education, humbly disguised and facing ignominious death at every turn for pure love of country and the glory of their Mikado. Such was he who, in appearance a Chinese mechanic, served with you on the submarine until reaching Idzu Harra. He is master

of several languages, including English, though that he did not confide even to you; and when I add that he is a member of the imperial family, I give you information that I trust you will consider as strictly confidential. Is your curiosity satisfied?"

"It is, sir," replied Dunster. "And I thank you for your explanation. Also, I beg to apologize for having been so inquisitive."

"No apology is necessary from one who has proved himself so good a friend of Japan."

"Perhaps not so much a friend of Japan, sir, as an enemy of Russia and a friend of Mr. Matsu, who was my roommate at Annapolis."

"Yes, I know of that Annapolis friendship," said the admiral, with a smile. "There you taught him to play football, while he taught you jiu-jitsu."

"Apparently, sir, you know every detail of my past life," laughed Dunster.

"No, my young friend, only those that affect Japan; and such things we must know, for they make up the sum of knowledge that in time of war is greatest power. Now, then, let us speak of the future. While it is not permitted for a foreigner to fight the battles of Japan, it is allowed that he shall teach us how to fight, and I much desire to engage your service as instructor for some of my young men in the art of the submarine. May I ask if you will thus act, taking quarters on this ship, with rank of professor and pay of captain, dating back to the day of your leaving Annapolis?"

For a moment Dunster hesitated, and glanced at Takahaki.

Intercepting the glance, the admiral smiled a smile of comprehension as he added, "Lieutenant-Commander Matsu will remain in command of our only submarine, though attached also to this ship as assistant to the professor in his instructions."

"In that case, sir, I shall be very happy to accept your splendid offer," said Dunster. "Only I must give warning that Taki—I mean Mr. Matsu—knows far more about submarines than I do."

"Oh no, honorable sir!" interrupted Takahaki, eagerly. "I am not have the knowledge of my friend the Count Casimir, for he study long time after I leave America."

"I believe, gentlemen, that I have sufficient information upon which to base my judgment of your relative abilities," said the admiral, in a tone that put an instant end to further debate. "And, by-the-way, Mr. Brownleigh, I have one condition to impose. It is that while you remain with us you will not attempt to send out any letter for publication in America or elsewhere. I may add that I am a pretty constant reader of the *Service Journal*, published in your country. Now, gentlemen, I will bid you good-day, commending you to the care of my chief of staff, who will assign you quarters and see that you are provided with everything needful."

As the two young men left the admiral's cabin upon the conclusion of this momentous interview, the orderly on duty was shocked to see one of them

shake a fist in the face of the other, and to hear him utter an unintelligible expression in English. What he of the fist said was:

"Taki, old man, if you don't drop that confounded count business, I shall feel obliged—I certainly shall—to call you a Jap!"

"On this ship I not very 'fraid of that thing, Dun Brown," replied the other, with a grin.

A few days later came the special courier with despatches from Tokio; and that evening our lads were again ordered to the presence of the admiral. This time he received them on the after-deck, where he stood in full uniform, attended by a glittering staff that included every commissioned officer of the ship.

For several minutes the two young men whom he had summoned stood before him amid an unbroken silence, while the fighting admiral gazed at them with unseeing eyes, and apparently without knowledge of their existence. It was as though his spirit were communing with the spirits of his warrior ancestors, and he listened to words that none other might hear. Suddenly he came back, and almost abruptly handed to Takahaki the parchment commission, signed by the Mikado, that gave him rank as lieutenant-commander in the imperial navy. Also, he handed him a superb sword that had come as a gift from Prince Hito, "One time honored with service on submarine torpedo-boat *Naisha*."

As the embarrassed young officer attempted to frame a reply to the admiral's kindly words of

presentation, the fine band of the flag-ship relieved him of the necessity by striking up the national anthem of Japan. Although this composition did not appeal at all to Dunster Brownleigh, either as a sentiment or as a musical composition, it appeared to afford great satisfaction to all the others present.

Then came the turn of the young American whose fortunes had become so knit with those of the land of the rising sun; and as he stepped forward the admiral handed him a small but richly carved box of sandal-wood. In it lay the superbly jewelled insignia of the Golden Falcon, together with its broad ribbon of watered silk, and an autograph letter from the Mikado constituting the Count Casimir, of Warsaw, a knight of this famous Japanese order. In addition to this, Dunster received from his recent companion, the Prince Hito, a magnificent silken costume of a Japanese noble of the old régime. But, best of all, as he accepted these things, the band crashed into the stirring strains of "The Star-Spangled Banner," at which Dunster's speech was suddenly choked with emotion, and he turned hastily away to hide the tears that filled his eyes.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE *NAISHA* FULFILS HER MISSION

In 1894 the Japanese captured Port Arthur from China in less than three days, with a loss in killed of thirty-one men. A little later she was forced by the combined powers of Europe to relinquish her prize to Russia. During the next ten years the new occupants devoted their best military energies, backed by unstinted millions of rubles, to making it the strongest fortress in the world, stronger even than Gibraltar. With the opening of the year 1904, they believed they had accomplished their purpose and that Port Arthur was impregnable. Besides the chain of powerful forts, placed at every point of vantage on the great semicircle of hills lying behind Port Arthur and extending from sea to sea, the harbor was occupied by the most powerful European fleet ever seen in Eastern waters, while both hill-side and water-front were thickly sown with mines. To the north, up the mountainous backbone of the Liao Tung peninsula, the outer defences extended for twenty miles to the strong fortifications of Nan Shan (South Mountain), back of Dalny. Placing General Stoessel in command, and giving him some fifty thousand men, together with a two-

years supply of provisions and ammunition, Russia laughed to scorn the idea that any nation in the world could take Port Arthur from her.

But the Japanese determined to try once more for the great prize of which they had been robbed in 1895. So, in April, 1904, they began operations by landing an army in Yentoa Bay, some sixty miles distant from the place they proposed eventually to capture. During May they fought the spectacular battle of Nan Shan, put the Russians to headlong flight, and took possession of Dalny. Then they moved southward, steadily ousting the enemy from position after position, and driving him before them until, by the end of July, they had him cornered in Port Arthur itself, and were established before its main line of defensive works. During August and September the Mikado's men made repeated attempts to pierce these by bombardment and to carry them by furious assault. But the works were too strong, and by October 1st, after losing more men than were numbered in the entire Port Arthur garrison, the Japanese settled down to a siege in grim earnest, using those time-honored weapons, pick and shovel, and the methods of trench, approach, parallel, tunnel, and mine. Also, realizing the need of heavier batteries, they brought from their home coast-defences eighteen immense 11-inch howitzers, from which they proposed to drop huge shells, each holding five hundred pounds of a high explosive, not only into the forts, but into the city beyond the forts and on the decks of the

war-ship hiding in the harbor beyond the city. From the end of the railway, each of these great guns was dragged to position, sometimes three or four miles distant, by the sheer, brute strength of nearly one thousand men, and each had constructed for its emplacement a massive bed of concrete, eight feet thick and eighteen feet in diameter.

For three months these monster guns thundered against the "impregnable" fortress, breaching its walls, dismounting its artillery, exploding its magazines, shattering its buildings, and sinking, one after another, the splendid fleet of war-ships that huddled for safety under the high shores of the harbor. Then, on a day of sleet, drizzle, and boisterous winds, Admiral Togo summoned Lieutenant-Commander Matsu to his cabin and spoke to him as follows:

"The Russian Second Pacific Fleet is in the Indian Ocean. It soon may appear in these waters, and we must be ready to meet it. Before that time my ships must be refitted in home ports; but I cannot withdraw them so long as Port Arthur remains untaken or its harbor holds a single hostile warship in condition for fighting. One of the Russian battle-ships has thus far escaped injury from the land batteries and still floats ready for service. It must be attacked and destroyed from the sea, and you are the man whom I have chosen to accomplish this task."

Takahaki's face glowed with pleasure as he thanked the admiral for the great honor thus con-

PORT ARTHUR, THE TOWN, DOCKS, AND ROADSTEAD

ferred upon him. "The *Naisha* is ready, sir," he added, "and can set forth at a moment's notice."

"Then you may start at once, leaving this place in submerged condition, so as not to attract attention. When out of sight, proceed to Port Arthur and report arrival to officer commanding patrol flotilla; but await final instructions from that destroyer displaying two blue lights. Here is a chart showing channel supposed to be free from mines, and probable position of ship you are to destroy. Now go, always remembering that what you do is for the Mikado and that his spirit will be with you."

"I may bid farewell to my friend?" hesitatingly queried Takahaki.

"No," replied the admiral, kindly but firmly, "not even to him, for I desire this movement to be executed with the utmost secrecy."

So the *Naisha* quietly sank from sight, and her departure was unknown to any save her own crew, who supposed they were off for one of the many practice runs with which recently they had been kept busy. Even Dunster Brownleigh, happily engaged in demonstrating certain problems of submarine work to a group of eager young officers in the wardroom, had no intimation that his dearest friend had just been sent on the most desperate service at that moment confronting the Japanese navy.

Some hours later, on reporting to the commander of the patrol flotilla off Port Arthur, Takahaki also handed him a sealed letter and a slim packet care-

fully enveloped in oiled silk, with the request that if he did not call for them within two days they might be delivered as addressed. Then he waited and watched for two blue lights; but not until the night was nearly spent did they appear. Hastening in that direction, he found them to be borne by a slim, many-funnelled destroyer that was lying head on to the seas, under easy steam. Running under her counter and hailing, Takahaki was answered by a voice that sounded suspiciously like that of the admiral himself.

"Is it *Naisha?*"

"Ay, ay, sir—it is *Naisha.*"

"Then, in the name of the Mikado, carry out your instructions."

That was all, and in another moment the two blue lights had disappeared, while the little *Naisha*, making better weather than many a larger craft, was heading in towards the bold coast just beginning to assume form in the dim light of dawn. With deck awash, and only her conning-tower lifted above the dull waters, she was such a mere speck on the surface that even the powerful glasses from the forts on Golden Hill, The Tiger's Tail, Ki Kwan Hill, or White Wolf, always sweeping the sea for signs of a Japanese approach, failed to detect her.

The proud ships of Russia, driven from the inner harbor by the terrific mortar-fire that sought out its every anchorage and hiding-place, had fled for safety outside, under the high, fort-crowned bluffs of the coast. At first they had gathered in a cove

at the foot of Golden Hill; but even there the relentless shells had found them out, sunk most of them, and scattered the three or four survivors.

From the lofty summit of 203-Metre Hill, only two miles away, for whose capture the besiegers had paid thousands of lives, hyposcope observers could readily locate each ship and accurately direct the fire of hidden batteries by telephonic signals. So the fugitives were relentlessly followed and sunk, until only one, the might battle-ship *Sevastopol*, remained, crouching close under the bluffs topped by White Wolf Fort. No smoke was allowed to betray her presence, she was invisible from the Japanese observatory on Metre Hill, her lead-colored hull was one with the gray coast, and no gleam of glass or metal was permitted to flash a telltale signal. For a time her crew were watchful with the alertness inspired by a great fear; but with the passing of day after day in safety they grew forgetful of their danger. Then came a night of revel, when officers from the shore forts were entertained on board, and champagne—plentiful in Port Arthur to the very end—flowed with reckless freedom. To change the air of the overheated room a port was flung open, and no one of the revellers noticed that it was on the seaward side of the ship. So a stream of electric light flashed across the dark waters until it was caught by the watch-officer of a distant scout-boat lying at anchor on her post. The bearings of the light were carefully noted, and with the following dawn they pointed to a dim bulk close inshore

and barely distinguishable from the coast-line. As Admiral Togo sat at breakfast that morning a wireless message brought him the news that the last Russian battle-ship had been located hiding in the White Wolf's shadow. With the next dawn the *Naisha*, running through a field of mines as boldly as though such things were unknown, drew near to her mighty but unsuspecting foe.

Of course, Takahaki knew of the mines; but as it was impossible to locate them, while to proceed slowly would cost minutes that were more precious than human lives, he simply dismissed them from his mind and rushed forward, regardless of everything save the spot plotted on his chart as the hiding-place of the last battle-ship. Once his heart almost ceased its beating as his little craft struck some floating object a glancing blow, and there was a harsh, grating sound under her bilge. But, whatever it was, it did not explode, nor was there any leak in the *Naisha*. So it did not matter that death had made a clutch at him only to miss him by a hair's-breadth.

At length the great ship loomed above him, close at hand, much as an elephant might tower above a mouse, and all at once there was a bawling of orders and a scurrying to and fro on her decks. Then came a flash, a roar, and a solid shot, passing high over the submarine, plunged harmlessly into the sea half a mile beyond. Other shots followed in quick succession, and even the White Wolf woke up with a snarl of guns, though it could not yet discern its enemy.

When something less than two hundred yards away, Takahaki discharged his torpedo, and from the open hatch of his conning-tower, as regardless of the storm of bullets tearing the air to shreds about him as though they were so many rain-drops, he watched the bubbles that marked the swift course of the terrible missile. He could trace it half-way to the great target for which it was fairly aimed, and then he held his breath in expectation of what might follow. But there was no collision, no explosion—nothing save only the venomous spit of machine-guns threshing the sea into a froth with their flail of bullets.

The young commander knew what had happened the instant his time allowance of seconds had elapsed without result. The battle-ship was protected by a torpedo-net hanging in the water from a floating boom of logs—a fringe of steel against which his little engine, that he had hoped would deal so telling a blow, was fruitlessly beating. He must submerge and discharge another torpedo at a depth sufficient to pass it beneath the net.

"It is now that I wish for my friend Dun Brown," he sighed.

At the moment of firing that first shot the *Naisha's* engine had been reversed; and as Takahaki began to give the order for submergence, the little craft was going at full speed astern. Of a sudden there came, from the upper air, a sound of terror, quickly followed by the crash of a thunderbolt into the sea and an eruption as frightful as that of a volcano.

A mighty volume of water was lifted on high, only to fall again in foaming cataracts, while driven through its awful whiteness were a few crumpled sheets of steel and a mass of blackened fragments.

The attention of an observer on Metre Hill had been attracted by firing from somewhere beyond the White Wolf Fort; and, thinking that it might indicate the location of the missing battle-ship, he suggested that a few 11-inch shells be dropped in that direction. So an order was transmitted back over the hills, and in another minute an enormous projectile was hurtling skywards in the direction indicated. As it fell, the observer on Metre Hill, calmly noting its location, telephoned:

"Too far off shore. Range westward three hundred yards."

A gunner gave a half-turn to a screw, a huge muzzle was deflected the fraction of an inch to one side, and a second monster shell, filled with a quarter of a ton of shimose, went screaming and moaning on its lofty flight. In its descent it struck the last of the Port Arthur battle-ships, crashed through three armored steel decks, and blew out her bottom. Thus was the work of the *Naisha* accomplished.

That evening a Japanese torpedo-boat destroyer, that had come far and fast, dashed alongside the *Mikasa*, and the sphinx like admiral, who had been for some hours absent, once more boarded his flagship. Without speech, and barely glancing at those assembled about the gangway to do him honor, he walked past them and stopped at the entrance to

the wardroom, where he stood for a moment looking in. A young man sat at a table writing, but with his back towards the door. A glance served to show that he was not a Japanese, and the other, stepping to where he sat, laid on the table before him a sealed letter and a long, slender package enveloped in oiled silk containing a sword.

As Dunster Brownleigh, covered with confusion, sprang to his feet and saluted, the admiral gazed at him for an instant with expressionless face. Then, without a word, he sought his own cabin, where, as he carefully filled a pipe, a single tear trickled slowly across one of his rugged cheeks.

CHAPTER XXX

COMMANDER MATSU AND CADET BROWNLEIGH, OF ANNAPOLIS

When interrupted by the admiral, Dunster, writing a letter home, was penning the following paragraph:

"With you, dear people, this is Christmas Eve, while with us it is only the close of an ordinary day. If Taki were here he would help me recall one year ago to-night, when he and I danced at an academy hop. Not until it was ended and we were back in our own room would he tell me that he had been ordered home to take part in the war that is now upon us, and that he should be gone before sunrise. What a splendid record he has made for himself since that time! I have never known a chap more modestly brave than he, nor one of greater ability. If the war lasts a year longer, he is almost certain to become a commander, in which case I expect he will be the youngest in the Japanese navy. At this moment of writing I cannot imagine where he is, for he has been sent away on some secret service; but—"

With their last battle-ship sunk, with half their forts in the enemy's hands, and those that remained

to them shattered by mine and shell until they lay open to assault, with sickness decimating their ranks and starvation staring them in the face, hopeless of succor by land or sea, and almost exhausted by months of ceaseless fighting, the heroic defenders of Port Arthur realized that the time for surrender had arrived. So on January 1, 1905, a white flag fluttered above their crumbling parapets and, as though by magic, the dreadful turmoil of battle was quieted.

A few days later negotiations had been concluded, and the men of Japan once more were in possession of their own. Among the first to enter the fallen fortress, as an especial honor, and by virtue of his rank as a Knight of the Golden Falcon, was Dunster Brownleigh. Long ere this he had learned of the last glorious service performed by his dearest friend, and now his chief desire was to view the spot where Takahaki had given up his life for the glory of his Mikado. So, accompanied by two others from the *Mikasa's* wardroom, Dunster made the tedious pilgrimage to the bluffs crowned by the White Wolf Fort. At their base was a narrow beach heaped with a confused mass of wreckage, among which were many bodies, stiff-frozen, coated with sea-salt, and thus preserved with every feature intact.

Dunster had not dared hope that he would find even a trace of his friend; but the blessed privilege was granted to him, and as he examined body after body, they came at length, once more, face to face. While the tears of him who is left behind in a great

loneliness streamed from the eyes of the living, on the face of the dead was the smile of one who has finished well his task and gained the great reward.

A little later a mighty battle-ship, proudly flying the sun-flag of Japan and that of the silent admiral who was foremost of all the Mikado's sailors, steamed slowly into the exquisitely beautiful harbor of Nagasaki, receiving and answering thunderous salutes from the war-ships of many nations that vied with each other in doing him honor. For the present his work was done, and he had come home for rest and refreshment before setting forth to meet and destroy the second Russian fleet sent out to give him battle. Also the *Mikasa* brought home her dead, and once more were Dunster and Takahaki sailing in company.

Among the foreign war-ships that shook the Nagasaki hills with their loud-voiced welcome was one in spotless white, flying a flag that to Dunster's longing eyes was the most glorious on earth. He had not seen it since Russian hands had lowered it from the jackstaff of the *Cochise*, and now it filled him with an intense homesickness. Hardly had the *Mikasa* dropped her anchor before a captain's gig shot away from the American ship, and her commander, in full-dress uniform, was the first to greet the home-returning admiral.

As this visitor gained the *Mikasa's* deck, where he was received with all honors, Dunster Brownleigh was only restrained by the strict etiquette of the occasion from springing forward and claiming

his recognition; for, to his amazement, the American officer was none other than that one whom he had last known as superintendent of the Naval Academy at Annapolis. But he was forced to curb his impatience, for the guest was immediately conducted to the admiral's cabin, to which, a little later, Dunster was summoned. At the entrance one of the admiral's staff, there gathered, announced him as "The Count Casimir, of Warsaw, by graciousness of the Mikado, Knight of the Golden Falcon."

The American captain had risen to greet this personage, with such formalities as his announced rank demanded, but at sight of the young man he hesitated, and a look of blank amazement overspread his face. Then, even as the admiral, with a quizzical smile lighting his stern features, was beginning a formal introduction, the other sprang impulsively forward with both hands outstretched.

"Dunster Brownleigh, by all that is wonderful!" he cried. "My dear boy, what *is* the meaning of all this count and knight business? What have you been doing? How do you happen on board this ship, just in from Port Arthur, which no American officer has yet been allowed to visit? Answer me quickly, for I am consumed with curiosity."

"I don't know how to answer you quickly, sir, for it would take hours to tell you of all that has happened to me since I left the academy."

"Then come and dine with me, for I must hear your story, and we sail this very evening. Besides,

there are some friends of yours on board who would be terribly disappointed not to see you."

Dunster looked at the admiral to see if he had permission to accept this invitation, and the latter answered it for him, saying:

"Captain, before giving the Count Casimir a chance to accept your kind invitation, I wish to ask a favor, and it is that you will take him with you to America. Under extraordinary conditions he has nobly served the Mikado, and thus won the everlasting gratitude of every Japanese; but now we may no longer make use of him, since it is contrary to the policy of our government to allow foreigners to take an active part in our quarrel with another nation. Thus, by granting my request, you will relieve an embarrassing situation."

"Nothing could give me greater pleasure, admiral. Will you go with us, Brownleigh? Of course, I can't take you as a passenger, but, fortunately, I can offer you the position of captain's clerk, and can promise you a cordial welcome to the wardroom mess."

"I should love it above all things, sir; for, now that Taki is gone, and with no prospect of further service, I feel very useless here and out of place. Also, I might as well confess that I am awfully homesick for my own country and my own people."

"Of course you are, and the question of your going being settled, why can't you get ready and return with me now to the ship?"

Again Dunster sought the admiral's face, and again the latter answered for him: "It is perhaps that he would stay with us until we have paid last honors to his friend Commander Matsu, whose body will leave this ship in two hours' time for transportation to Tokio."

Dunster started at the title given his friend. Could it be that promotion had come to Takahaki even after his heroic death, or had the admiral made a slip?

"Commander Matsu?" repeated the American captain, in a tone of inquiry, and looking at his young countryman. "Of course, he can't mean the Japanese cadet of that name who was sent to Annapolis, and who left there but little more than a year ago."

"Yes, sir," answered Dunster, eagerly. "He refers to Takahaki Matsu, my roommate and dearest friend. He rose within a year to be lieutenant-commander, and was killed at Port Arthur only a few days ago."

"Since when," added the admiral, "he has again been promoted, and as Commander Matsu takes his place among the immortals of Japan who have died for the glory of their Mikado. It is ordered that he be given a royal funeral, and the ceremonies will begin on this ship at the hour of noon. If any of his American friends desire to be present, they will be welcomed in his name."

Thus it happened that at high noon of that day a throng of officers, not only Japanese, but repre-

senting every war-ship then at Nagasaki, were gathered about a flag-draped casket that lay in state on the after-deck of the *Mikasa*. From her jackstaff the sun-rayed banner of Japan drooped at half-mast, while a similar emblem of sorrow was displayed from a masthead of every other war-ship in the harbor. On the casket lay the full-dress uniform of a commander in the imperial Japanese navy. Also, about one end was draped a small silken American flag, the privilege of which had been asked by, and granted to, certain of those who had known and loved him at Annapolis. Now they stood foremost among the many assembled to do him honor — Dunster Brownleigh, Ensigns Cyrus Snelling and Ezra Lloyd, and half a dozen other officers from the American battle-ship, including its commander.

The great admiral, with expressionless eyes that seemed to gaze into the unfathomable future, and with bared head, stood at the foot of the casket, while the band played softly and the *Mikasa's* officers filed slowly past, each saluting the dead and touching his uniform with gentle fingers. Then, escorted by a detail of officers, the body was borne to a waiting launch, on which it was to begin its long journey to the nation's capital. As it left the *Mikasa*, she began a salute of minute-guns that was continued until one had been fired for each year of the young commander's life.

That same afternoon the great, white, American battle-ship, with homeward-bound pennant stream-

ing from her main-mast head, and her band waking the hill echoes of Nagasaki with its crash of martial music, lifted her anchor and began slowly to thread the narrow passage leading out to the open sea. As she passed the *Mikasa* her guns thundered forth a farewell that was answered by a mighty roar of artillery and cheering from the Japanese flagship.

An hour later Dunster Brownleigh stood on her after-bridge straining his eyes for a parting glimpse of the fair land that held all now remaining of his dear friend and one-time roommate—a land that had honored him, a land for which he had fought, and a land that he loved, but the soil of which he never had trodden. As he stood there buried in reverie, the ship's commander came and rested a kindly hand on his shoulder.

"Well, Brownleigh," he said, "there is another of your life chapters closed. What shall be written in the next? Are you coming back to us, or have you other plans?"

"If it were possible, sir, I should like to go back to Annapolis and graduate with my class," replied Dunster. "I hadn't thought of such a thing until after Taki's death; but in a letter that he left for me he begged me to do it, and if it were possible—"

"It is entirely possible," interrupted the captain, heartily. "You have a long voyage before you, and time for a lot of study between here and New York, especially as we must dock at Hong-Kong,

where we shall remain for a month or so. I will help you, and so I am sure will Snelling and Lloyd, who are fresh from the grind. If you say so, we will make a beginning this very evening."

"I do say so, sir, and thank you from the bottom of my heart," responded Dunster, gratefully.

As the homeward voyage was made by way of the Suez Canal, Dunster, before reaching New York, had completed his first circumnavigation of the world. The ship made a long stop at Hong-Kong, allowing him, Snelling, and Lloyd opportunities for several runs up to Canton and explorations of that most wonderful city. Her anchor was next dropped at Singapore, within one degree of the equator, and her third stop was at the lovely island of Ceylon, where her officers, as in duty bound, paid their respects to the only American lady resident of Colombo. Then across the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean she ploughed her way to Aden, hot, treeless, verdureless, and rainless, and thence up the entire length of narrow, deep-blue waters known as the Red Sea to Suez. From here, while she passed slowly through the great canal, our three young friends again got leave that enabled them to rush by train up to Cairo and see its sights—the Nile, the pyramids, the Sphinx, and the desert—before regaining the ship at Port Said, where she was taking in coal for her Mediterranean run. They stopped at Malta for a day, at Naples long enough for Vesuvius and Pompeii, and finally anchored for several days among the British

war-ships gathered in the shadow of the mighty rock that stands, the world over, as the enduring symbol of strength. Passing out of the narrow strait, and bidding farewell to the Old World at Cape St. Vincent, on the coast of Portugal, they headed fairly across the Western Ocean for the blessed haven in which stands Liberty enlightening the world. One hundred miles off Nantucket the ship was thrown into a fever of excitement by receiving the following wireless: "Battle of the Sea of Japan, fought May 27th, off Tsu Islands, between Togo and Rojestvensky. Russian fleet destroyed. Japanese loss insignificant."

Of course, Dunster's parents had, long ere this, known of his home-coming; and when the ship reached New York they were on hand with a rapturous welcome.

"Oh, my boy! my boy! my boy!" sobbed his mother as she flung her arms about his neck.

"Here it is, Mother Mirska! Here is what I went for!" cried Dunster, as soon as he could free himself from her clinging embrace; at the same time he snatched from his bosom the silver case she had given him on parting. Now, in addition to the note written with her father's blood, it held a snow-white lock of hair, sent to her from a Russian prison with that father's blessing.

"And so, son," said Mr. Brownleigh, "I understand that you are now the Count Casimir, of Warsaw?"

"No, father, Dun Brown, of America, if you please,

Knight of the Golden Falcon of Japan, in memory of my dear friend, Takahaki Matsu; but hoping, above everything else, soon to be once more Cadet Brownleigh, of Annapolis."

THE END